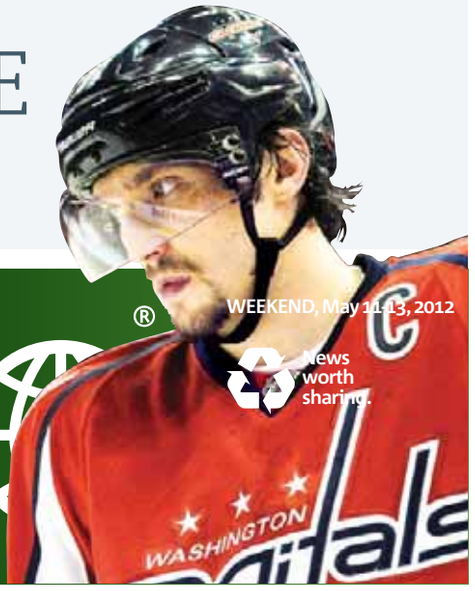
TEAMS LOOK FOR GAME 7 ADVANTAGE

ALL BETS ARE OFF AT MSG AS RANGERS, CAPS LOOK TO MOVE ON TO EASTERN FINAL PAGE 46



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STUDENTS DIG IN

Ashleigh McCabe, a Grade 6 student at Buchanan School, shovels a pile of dirt around a tree Thursday, as Calgary Board of Education students and staff took part in activities in honour of Arbour Day. CANDICE WARD/FOR METRO

Alleged attack prompts plea for taxi shields

Safety. Committee likely to recommend mandatory cameras in vehicles first

JEREMY NOLAIS
jeremy.nolais@metronews.ca

After allegedly being attacked himself, the head of Calgary's Cab Drivers Association is drafting a letter to the mayor renewing cries for mandatory protective shields in city taxis.

Rajiv Kapil claims last month two customers climbed into his cab and lit a cigarette.

When he asked them to butt out, the pair turned violent and struck him repeatedly in the chest.

"We need more to protect us," Kapil told Metro. "If I had (a shield), I wouldn't have been hurt because they were in the back."

But Mayor Naheed Nenshi was quick to point out Thursday that cab drivers have the freedom to install a shield in their vehicle if they so choose.

"They're not that expensive and I understand that there's actually a whole bunch of them in a warehouse in Calgary that are waiting for cab drivers who want to put them in," Nenshi said, adding he is waiting on a report specifically discussing cab-safety measures expected from the Taxi and Limousine Advisory Committee (TLAC) later this month.

Len Bellingham, chair of the Calgary Livery Association and a committee member, said it's likely TLAC will recommend a trial of mandatory cameras in vehicles starting next year before determining whether mandatory protective shields are necessary.

Kapil has long maintained that 10 to 15 cab driver assaults occur in Calgary every month and the majority go unreported.

WITH FILES FROM KATIE TURNER

Feeling the pain of fees

The Calgary school board may alter proposed changes to parental fees after negative feedback PAGE 3

Car blasts shake Syria

Pair of suicide bombings kill dozens of people, damaging hope that the country can avoid civil war PAGE 22

Movies heat up summer

Metro's Reel Guys take a look at a few potential blockbusters coming to a theatre near you PAGE 35

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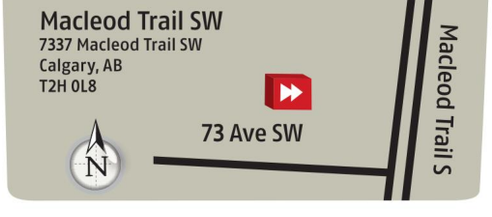

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Crime

Charges laid against former head of art gallery

Police laid 10 criminal charges against the former president and CEO of the Art Gallery of Calgary relating to fraud and falsifying documents, among others.

Some details came to light last week but charges were officially laid against Valerie Ann Cooper late Wednesday. She appeared in court on Thursday and was released with conditions.

According to Const. Tanya Bertulli, the nine-month investigation began last August, with allegations dating from July 2005 to February 2012. A civil lawsuit has also been filed against Cooper.

Bertulli said police were tipped off by witnesses during Cooper's reign at the gallery, but would not elaborate.

"All I'll say is that witnesses came forward with enough information for us to begin a criminal investigation," the constable said.

While nothing was physically stolen, Bertulli said the gallery's loss of more than $438,000 is in the form of alleged false invoicing, unauthorized salary increases, fictitious loans, paintings, and goods and services purchased by Cooper and then expensed through the gallery.

The paintings, valued at around $12,000, have not been located.

According to Bertulli, neither Cooper nor the gallery's board were made aware of the investigation until March. Cooper parted ways with the gallery March 30.

TESSA CLAYTON/FOR METRO

Robert Hurdman, president of the Calgary Association of Parents and School Councils, is seen with his three-year-old daughter Katie on Thursday. Hurdman is pleased that the public-school board is revisiting its contentious school-fee model for fall. CANDICE WARD/FOR METRO

CBE may change fees

Busing. Parents with children in alternative programs offering bulk of criticism, says chief superintendent

JEREMY NOLAIS
jeremy.nolais@metronews.ca

School fees may not be set in stone for the fall as previously thought, the chief superintendent of Calgary's public-school board said Thursday.

After gathering feedback from the public, Calgary Board of Education officials unveiled a new fee model last month that will now see families billed for utilizing both busing and noon-hour supervision services, as well as increased charges for those with children attending alternative programs.

While Supt. Naomi Johnson said feedback provided to the board indicates most CBE parents are happy with the new model — a majority of families will pay less this fall as noon-hour supervision fees drop $65 — those with children enrolled in alternative programs are concerned over being saddled with a $510 — 72 per cent — increase.

Because of this, the board has begun hosting area meetings in the city and plans to bring a variety of stakeholders together for an overall deliberation of the new model May 31.

Changes to the model could result from that, said Johnson.

"We need their (parents) help to problem solve.... It's hard," Johnson added.

Want to offer your input?

- Nearly 10,000 children are enrolled in alternative programs offered by the Calgary Board of Education.
- Parents still hoping to offer their input on the CBE's new fee model are encouraged to attend an area meeting being hosted in the days ahead. Information about those meetings can be found online at cbe.ab.ca.

CBE trustee Carol Bazinet said concerns she's hearing from parents surround a lack of understanding about what makes busing for alternative programming so much more expensive than that for a regular program.

"Parents have said they are willing to pay more providing they are shown the data on why (busing) costs more," she added, referring to feedback provided by 4,000 respondents to a survey on school fees conducted earlier this year.

Robert Hurdman with the Calgary Association of Parents and School Councils said he was encouraged by the CBE's response to criticism from some parents.

"I think they have heard from a larger number of parents regarding this fee-schedule change than they have on any other issue in the recent past," he said.

Follow Jeremy Nolais on Twitter @Metro_Jeremy

1 NEWS

On the web

Modern-day Crusoe

Modern-day homestead or survival game? An Anchorage, Alaska, oil employee/filmmaker is heading to a nearly deserted island for one year with nothing but his dog as a sidekick. Watch at metronews.ca

Mobile news

The jury's out on whether it's breastfeeding at its best or parenting at its worst. Either way, it's an image that has tongues wagging. A controversial Time magazine cover photo is going viral, and people across the globe, Canadians included, are voicing their opinions. Scan the code for the story.

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Labour relations

Union accuses city of unfair practices

The union for Calgary Zoo employees has filed an unfair-labour-practices application with the Alberta Labour Relations Board.

CUPE 37 president Don Monroe claims the city has been moving employees from the city jurisdiction to the Zoo Society, resulting in wage and pension losses. About 16 positions were affected. METRO

Calgary Zoo

View ospreys on live webcam

Calgarians can once again enjoy the live-streamed activities of a pair of osprey.

The Calgary Zoo launched the webcam five years ago after ospreys built a nest atop an Enmax pole near the zoo for birdwatchers' viewing pleasure. It will be live until the birds' seasonal departure in September. Visit enmax.com/osprey. METRO

This screen capture shows the Calgary Zoo's osprey cam. CONTRIBUTED

Child porn

Man charged with porn offences

A Calgary man faces child-porn-related charges after a four-month investigation by the RCMP into suspicious Internet behaviour.

Jason Arthur Friend, 47, faces a total of 10 charges. Two alleged victims have been identified, but police believe there may be more and are urging the public to come forward with any information. METRO

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Wait list for parking is stunting cyclists' ride

Not enough parking. City drafting new development policy for bike amenities, including private office buildings

KATIE TURNER
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Navigating to work may no longer be the biggest hurdle for Calgary cyclists — some are finding the problem is what to do when they get to work.

Michael Burt began working at the TransCanada Tower last year and, before becoming a bike commuter this summer, he inquired about secure bike parking in his building.

"There's over 85 people on a waiting list and that means over a year wait for me to cycle in to work," said Burt.

Bike Calgary president Brent Clark said the issue of parking is one he's only heard of recently.

"In a way, it's a good thing because it shows more people are wanting to bike," said Clark. "The problem is, if you don't have anywhere to park your bike, you're probably not going to want to ride."

Both Burt and Clark agree as the city rolls out a cycling strategy that will improve infrastructure, the mandate needs to come from officials to have private office buildings include cycling amenities.

Spokesperson for transportation planning Ryan Murray said there are plans in the works to do exactly that.

As it stands, existing building owners have the choice to retrofit their offices with bike parking and showers, but the Calgary Planning Commission is currently developing a new policy that would mandate developers to include certain features for cyclists such as parking, said Murray.

Bike Calgary president Brent Clark said part of encouraging people to commute on bike is ensuring the proper amenities, such as secure parking, are available. KATIE TURNER/METRO

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WHAT'S WORTH SAVING IN CALGARY?

IN DEFENCE OF
Mike Morrison

This week it was finally announced that the city would indeed step in and save Eamon's Gas Station.

Sure, the gas station might not seem like much to the many people who drive by it every day, without giving it a second glance.

But for thousands of Calgarians, that small abandoned gas station holds timeless memories of exciting family trips to the seemingly faraway mountains and so much more.

For most cities, saving a historic landmark like Eamon's would be an easy decision, but as you may have noticed, for better or worse, Calgary isn't like most cities.

When you think of places rich in Canadian architectural history, you probably don't think of ours.

Sure there are pockets of buildings and houses preserved over the decades. Look to neighbourhoods like Sunnyside, Mission and Victoria Park's lowly standing house for gentle reminders of a life before the Olympics.

However, for a city that is barely 100 years old, there's not much left to prove it. Especially when you consider how old the rest of the country is. Besides the odd building here and there, our city's landscape is as old as faces on the Real Housewives of Mount Royal.

For some reason, this city has drastically lagged behind on preserving our history and recognizing the benefits of keeping older buildings, regardless of the cost and upkeep.

Thanks to innovative architecture like The Bow building and the Peace Bridge, we've proven that we're great at looking ahead; however, after years of seeing beautiful houses destroyed in neighbourhood after neighbourhood, I'm afraid that in a few years, we'll regret not saving more of the past.

You know what they say about hindsight, right?

Or maybe not.

I mean whoever goes to Rome to see the Coliseum, or wander the tiny alleys of Old Quebec City, where you actually walk past cannonballs?

Sure, Toronto's Casa Loma is neat, but did you know that Ontario's capital also has a whole museum dedicated to shoes? Who needs castles when you have stilettos?

Atlantic Canada collects millions of tourist dollars every year, thanks to its rich and colourful history, but why would we want to do something like that when we have things like Nashville North and Calaway Park?

Of course, while we've lost some amazing buildings over the years, like the Penny Lane complex, we've also been fortunate enough to say goodbye to things like Electric Avenue and Cowboys. So maybe letting go of some of our history is a good thing, even though, I suspect, we'll be the ones that inevitably pay for it in the end.

Park to get facelift after 100 years

Development.
Restoration of mini-train one of many highlights as city undertakes $10.5-million project

CELESTE DE MUELENAERE
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City planners are investing $10.5 million from the community investment fund to redevelop and restore of one of Calgary's oldest parks.

And Mayor Naheed Nenshi was thrilled to announce Thursday that part of the multimillion-dollar renovation of Bowness Park ensures "that the memorable mini-train will be restored and generations of kids are going to enjoy that train again."

Located in the historic district of Bowness in the northwest with 30 hectares along the Bow River, the park has served as an outdoor and recreational facility for many Calgarians for over 100 years.

Area Ald. Dale Hodges said the project is important because "Bowness Park is the central jewel of the community and an anchor to Calgary's parks system."

With a balance of old and new, the renovation will provide park goers with a new wadding pool inspired by the historic swimming pool, fire pits and even a recreation of the old orthophonic — a 1920s music playing device.

"We are preserving the integrity and the significance of this park while ensuring it's updated with modern amenities," Nenshi said.

Mayor Naheed Nenshi draws some laughs from community and protective services general manager Erika Hargesheimer while discussing details of a renovation of Bowness Park on Thursday. CELESTE DE MUELENAERE/FOR METRO

Quoted

"I came to this park with my family as a child. I've fallen in that lagoon more than once. My sister even had her wedding reception in this park."
Mayor Naheed Nenshi

Project highlights

- New park-entrance bridge and road system to improve traffic flow.
- Fire pits, sitting areas and access to lagoon.
- Trail along river, restoration of the riverbank.

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The province is holding off on any new initiatives targeting Alberta highways, such as Deerfoot Trail, but is evaluating road safety after several fatal collisions in recent weeks. METRO FILE

Province avoiding 'knee-jerk reaction' after fatal crashes

Government. Justice and transport ministers evaluating Alberta roads

JEREMY NOLAIS
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Added police enforcement on Alberta highways is a possibility, but officials want more evaluation of provincial road safety before green-lighting new initiatives.

Jonathan Denis, who has assumed the solicitor-general and justice-minister roles, said a number of recent high-profile crashes are alarming, but he believes the public looks for a "measured" response.

"It's important to me not to make a knee-jerk reaction," Denis said. "We have noticed there can be a lot of problems on long weekends.... There's simply more cars on the road on long weekends."

Some citizens called for government action after a fatal collision on Highway 63, running between Redwater and Fort McMurray, that killed seven people.

A four-day enforcement blitz last weekend on the dangerous stretch yielded more than 600 fines, but RCMP conceded dangerous driving is an issue across the province.

Newly appointed transportation minister and former Calgary alderman Ric McIver has said in interviews since attaining the post on Tuesday that he is dedicated to improving traffic flow and safety on Alberta's busiest thoroughfares.

Don Szarko of the Alberta Motor Association said spring is typically a troublesome time on provincial roads and his organization tends to roll out safety-awareness campaigns accordingly.

"We would hope the province will keep enforcement levels up to where they have been in recent years," Szarko added.

Tragedy on the roads

- Provincewide, 21,000 safety-violation tickets were handed out to Alberta drivers in 2011.
- The ripple effects of fatal crashes in Calgary continued to be felt this week, as family and friends in Morley buried Eleasha Evangeline Wesley on Thursday. The 10-year-old was ejected from her family's Grand Am after it was struck by a Kia Sedona on May 3. She was not wearing her seatbelt.
- On Wednesday, a six-year-old succumbed to injuries suffered during a May 1 crash near Chestermere. An eight-year-old died at the scene of that accident.

10-day blaze. Ogden Road fire is finally out, but burning questions remain

Calgary fire crews finally extinguished a fire in the southeast that saw several businesses evacuated on Wednesday.

The blaze had burned since the end of April at Calgary Metal Recycling, at 3415 Ogden Road Southeast.

Now that the immediate danger is over, deputy chief Len MacCharles said the department is working with the company to prevent future problems.

"This was somewhat of a unique fire. In fact, doing a little homework on it, there has not been another significant auto-fluff fire in Canada," he said.

MacCharles said 75 per cent of the materials on site had to be removed and cooled before the fire could be tackled.

Questions also remain about the cause of the blaze and who, ultimately, will foot the bill for the effort to snuff it out.

Asked about it on Thursday, Mayor Naheed Nenshi said it depends on liability.

"The province is very good about coming in and helping us with emergency costs like this, but at the end of the day we also pay for a fire department for a reason — to put out fires," he said.

TESSA CLAYTON/FOR METRO/WITH FILES FROM CELESTE DE MUELENAERE

Slow burn

- The Ogden Road fire burned for 10 days and caused several evacuations and road closures.
- Reports say one company may have lost up to $100,000 in business.

Crews try to snuff out the Ogden Road fire. METRO FILE

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Zoo. Calgary researcher part of team mapping world's animals

Dr. Axel Moehrenschlager of the Calgary Zoo stares out at some flamingos, which could be catalogued as part of the new virtual Map of Life. TESSA CLAYTON/FOR METRO

If you've ever wondered where to find an American Pika, a new website will be able to show you exactly that, and more.

On Thursday, the Map of Life, a digital catalogue and archive of the world's animals that includes input from a Calgary researcher, was unveiled.

"By bringing together all types of information … the project hopes to support our community in understanding and saving the world's biodiversity," said Dr. Jana McPherson, who is based out of the Calgary Zoo, in a press release.

TESSA CLAYTON/FOR METRO

mappinglife.org

- 1.2 million species have been catalogued in the Map of Life, but 91 per cent of ocean life hasn't been identified yet and 86 per cent of land species haven't been counted.
- One-quarter of the world's mammals and one-third of the world's amphibians are facing extinction.

Hockey marathoners run out of Gatorade but not steam

Derek Rayner takes a break during the 10.5 day Hockey Marathon for the Kids in Chestermere on Thursday. CANDICE WARD/FOR METRO

World record. Players eat, sleep and live at arena for 10.5 days to beat world record, help raise money for sick kids

CELESTE DE MUELENAERE
calgary@metronews.ca

After 174 cases of Gatorade, numerous IVs and uncountable blisters, the Hockey Marathon for the Kids in Chestermere has reached the halfway point and is continuing on to complete 250 straight hours of hockey.

In addition to setting records, the group is raising money for the Alberta Children's Hospital Foundation and Chestermere Minor Hockey. Event co-ordinator Lesley Plumley said despite the mental and physical strain, the players have big hearts and that is keeping them going.

"The guys are in a lot of pain as they're skating. Their feet are swelling so bad, the skates they brought are too small," Plumley said, appealing to public donations of used skates.

Player Derek Rayner, 32, said ice baths and physiotherapists are helping them deal with the pain, as well as the chefs on hand and the twin beds donated by Best Western.

Rayner added that sleep deprivation and swollen feet are small costs for the opportunity to help kids overcome illness. Swollen feet are not the only injuries plaguing the players, said Plumley.

One player separated his shoulder, while another took a puck off his foot, forcing him to sit out for a few days. Plumley said the community support and sponsorship has been overwhelmingly generous.

Quoted

"Every kid deserves a second chance, and if that means me losing a little sleep and having swollen legs, then that is fine."

Derek Rayner, player

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Ed Schutz wishes people would slow down in his Ranchlands cul-de-sac, but other than that, he likes the community.
JEREMY NOLAIS/METRO

City abandoning neighbourhood cul-de-sac design

Goal. City planners aim to build what they call 'complete communities'

JEREMY NOLAIS
jeremy.nolais@metronews.ca

Long a haven for ball hockey and testing out training wheels, city planners have moved away from the traditional cul-de-sac design in recent years.

"They don't do a great deal for walkability," explains Scott Lockwood, manager of new community design. "Really, it comes back to city council's goal of building complete communities."

The bulk of Calgary neighbourhoods nowadays rely more heavily on a grid system, Lockwood said.

Leslie Evans with the Federation of Calgary Communities said while many adults have fond memories of growing up on a cul-de-sac, she is not necessarily sold on a common adage that the design increases safety.

Suburbia

"There's nothing wrong with living in a suburban area, but what makes it much better is if you don't have to use a car to do every single thing." Scott Lockwood, manager of new community design for the city

"Certainly there is more traffic in a grid system ... but the cul-de-sac concept can be isolating as well," she said. "You know those neighbours really well, but you don't necessarily get out into the broader community."

Lockwood said grids also help sustain community businesses, adding his department is working with developers to bring back corner stores and other small outlets in new community designs.

"It goes back to city council's goal to build complete communities," he said, pointing to communities like SkyView Ranch in the city's northeast as ideal setups.

Ed Schutz has lived for years with his wife and daughter on a cul-de-sac in Ranchlands.

"We love it ... minus the bozos who come flying in here doing 50-60 kilometres," he said. "You definitely get to keep an eye on things and you tend to see neighbours more, I suppose."

Follow Jeremy Nolais on Twitter @Metro_Jeremy

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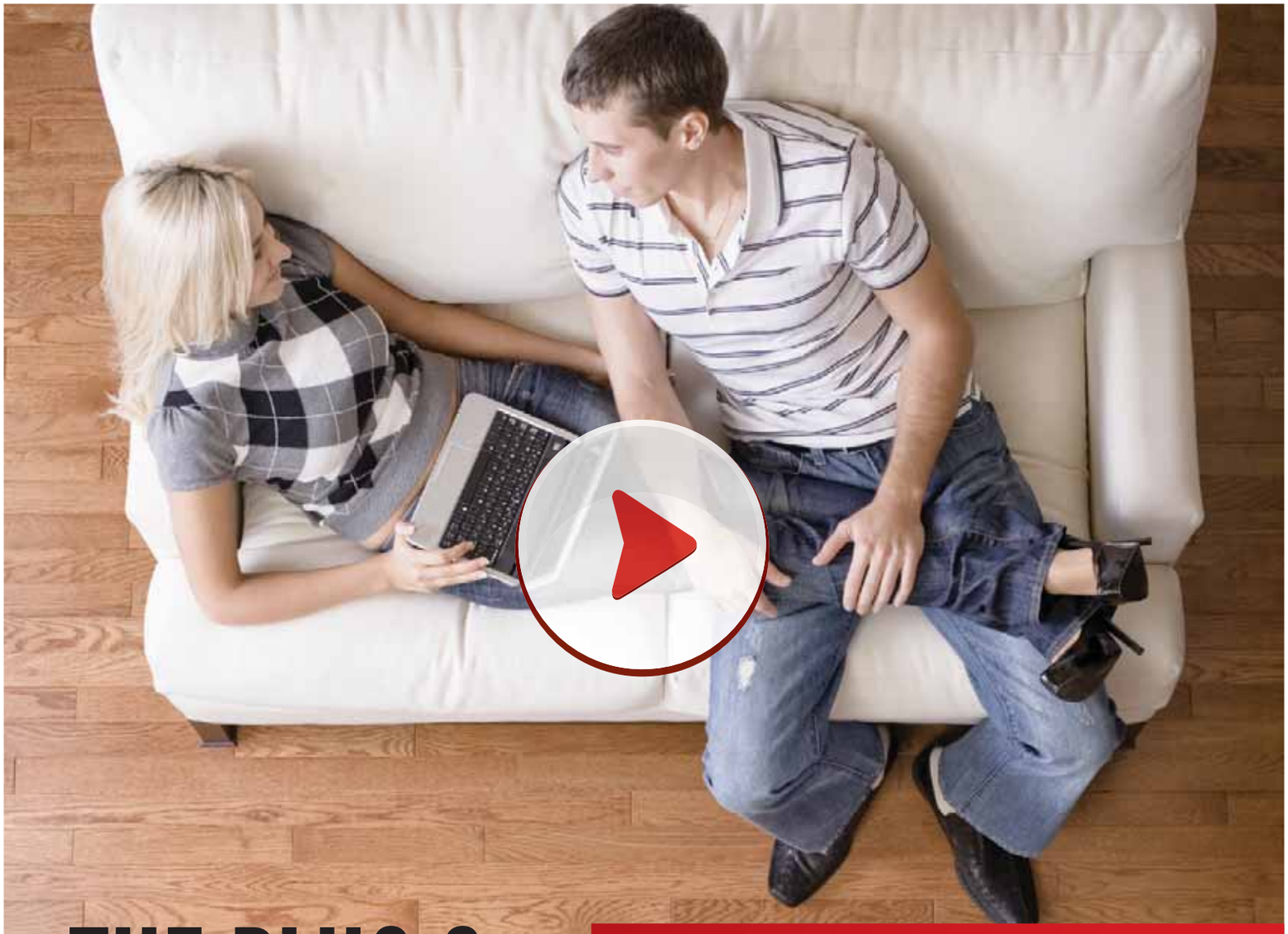

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Hockey. MacLean takes flack for 9-11 comment

For once, Don Cherry isn't in the hot seat over what he said on Hockey Night In Canada.

Instead it's his longtime on-air companion Ron MacLean, who sparked controversy when he compared players to 9-11 first responders prior to Wednesday's playoff game between New York and Washington.

At the start of the broadcast, MacLean notes that the two cities were united by the tragedy of the Sept. 11, 2001, terrorist attacks.

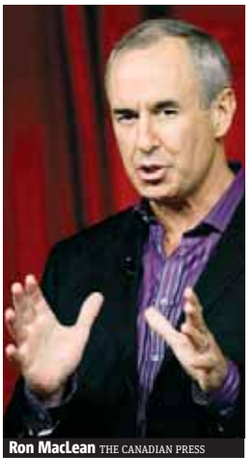
He says it is "crazy to compare what the emergency responders did during that time, but a spirit has to start somewhere."

He then goes on to say you "can't help but be struck by the players and the way they've played these games.

"They are like police officers, they are like firefighters. You can't fight fire with ego. The pain these men have faced, the price they keep on paying, the hearts they keep on lifting."

MacLean and the CBC issued a statement Thursday to "clarify" the comments, which were rebuked by columnists on both sides of the border and scorned on Twitter.

But his statement failed to soothe some on the social-networking website, who noted he opted to explain rather than back down from the comparison.



Ron MacLean THE CANADIAN PRESS

"Ron Maclean decides to defend instead of back off his ... ridiculous hyperbole. A stupid, disrespectful comparison but not malicious," tweeted Jason Pachkowski of Regina.

While he didn't retract the comments in the statement, he did elaborate on his thought process. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Judge deemed crucial evidence inadmissible in Michael Rafferty trial

London, Ont. Jury sequestered in the trial of 8-year-old Tori Stafford's alleged murderer as laptop evidence comes to light

Warning: Graphic details from this court case may disturb some readers.

A laptop computer belonging to the man accused of kidnapping, sexually assaulting and killing Victoria Stafford was used to search online for "real underage rape" and "nude preteen" not long before the eight-year-old was abducted, court documents indicate.

But the jury in Michael Rafferty's trial — now sequestered and deciding his fate — doesn't know it, along with a number of other facts that the court deemed inadmissible.

The Crown contends Rafferty also downloaded "substantial" amounts of child pornography, and there was evidence of snuff films — movies depicting real killings — on his laptop. A woman he met online alleged that he drugged, choked and raped her. A litany of past dates reported he had a penchant for sexual choking. Some even complained of his "disconcerting" behaviour toward their children.

The jury doesn't know that, either.

Superior Court Judge Thomas Heeney refused to allow evidence found on Rafferty's laptop and BlackBerry — the searches, the evidence of child porn and a downloaded movie about Karla Homolka — because the search violated Rafferty's charter rights.

When police legally searched Rafferty's car and found the two devices, they should have obtained another search warrant to examine their contents, Heeney ruled — even though at the time there was no binding authority upon them to do so.

Defence lawyers Dirk Derstein and Laura Giordano speak to the media outside the court at a break in proceedings. DAVE CHIDLEY/THE CANADIAN PRESS

THE CANADIAN PRESS

For continuing coverage of the Michael Rafferty trial, go to metronews.ca.

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Sharp-eyed buyer: "Holy Cow! It's really a Picasso."
ZACHARY BODISH/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Unemployed man buys Picasso print in Ohio thrift shop for $14

Awesome find. Signed authentic poster cost him just $14.14, but got him $7,000

An unemployed Columbus, Ohio, man was browsing at his local thrift store for items he could restore and resell when he spotted a Picasso poster with the word "Exposition" written across the front, some French words and the image of a warped round face. He handed over $14.14 for what he saw as a nice commercial print.

Some Internet searches later — and a closer look at markings on the lower-right area — and he sold what's believed to be a signed Picasso print for $7,000 US to a private buyer who wants to remain anonymous.

"A pretty darn good return," said Zachary Bodish.

The 46-year-old Bodish, who was a volunteer co-ordinator at a local museum for six years, turned to the Internet and a blog to write about his find from March. Bodish had lately been supplementing his income with buying and reselling restored furniture, and he realized he may have hit a jackpot.

"I could tell it was not a modern print," he said. "So I thought, 'Well, it's probably not really a fine Picasso print. What's the chance of finding that in a thrift store in Columbus, Ohio?

"It wasn't until I realized where the signature would be, and that those little red marks were right where the signature should be, that I got a stronger magnifying glass out and determined that, 'Holy cow! It's really a Picasso.'"

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

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Get it to the Greek

An actress portraying the mythical high priestess Ino Menegaki passes the Olympic flame to Spyros Gianniotis, a 32-year-old Greek swimmer who won a silver medal for Greece at the 2008 Beijing Games, during the traditional lighting of the flame ceremony on Thursday in Ancient Olympia, Greece, where the Olympics began.

KOSTAS TSIRONIS/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Third time lucky?

Athens deadlock may actually end

Hopes rose slightly Thursday that Greece could end its post-electoral deadlock without having to hold new elections, as international partners warned that Athens must stick to its hugely unpopular austerity program or abandon the euro.

Socialist leader Evangelos Venizelos, who received the presidential mandate to try to form a government after two other party chiefs failed, said a meeting Thursday with a left-wing potential kingmaker had proved encouraging.

If this third mandate fails, President Karolos Papoulias will convene party leaders in a last-ditch effort to get a deal — otherwise new elections will be held in a month.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

27 marathons

Izzard using feet to honour Mandela

British comedian and endurance runner Eddie Izzard says he'll run 27 marathons in honour of Nelson Mandela, who was jailed 27 years before being released to help usher in South Africa's democracy.

Izzard spoke of his plan Thursday on the sidelines of a reception for donors at Mandela's foundation and archives in Johannesburg.

He says he will run the marathons in 27 consecutive days in South Africa along routes he will map out himself at sites around the country linked to Mandela's personal history.

In 2009, Izzard ran 1,770 kilometres in seven weeks across Britain for charity.

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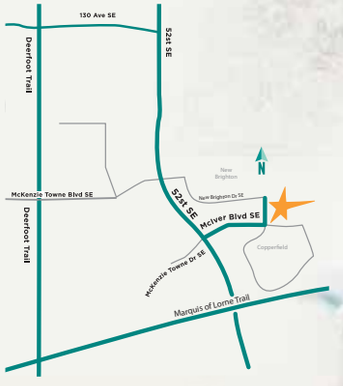

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Obama decided to back gay marriage before VP's remark

U.S. Biden says sorry to Obama for comments that led president to speed up his public acknowledgement of his support for same-sex unions: Source

U.S. President Barack Obama
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

U.S. President Barack Obama says he'd already decided to come out for gay marriage before Vice-President Joe Biden publicly endorsed it.

Obama tells ABC in an interview that he wasn't worried about being upstaged by Biden on the volatile social issue.

However, at one point, Obama says, "Would I have preferred to have done this in my own way, in my own terms without, I think, there being a lot of notice to everybody? Sure."

But Obama quickly adds, "All's well that ends well."

He tells ABC's Robin Roberts that he "already made a decision to take this position" before Biden made his comments Sunday in response to a question in a nationally broadcast interview.

Education Secretary Arne Duncan endorsed gay marriage on Monday.

Obama says in Wednesday's interview — shown Thursday morning — he didn't revise his position as part of a re-election campaign ploy.

"It would be hard to argue that somehow this is something that I'd be doing for political advantage because, frankly, the politics, it's not clear how they're going to cut."

Several countries, mostly in Europe but also Canada, Argentina and South Africa, already allow gay marriage.

Gay-rights activists around the world hailed Obama's support for same-sex marriage as a symbolic victory.

But there were very few signs that Obama's announcement Wednesday would drive change abroad. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Undulating blob is a type of jellyfish: Expert

Captured by a deep-sea camera, this shot of a large blob has spawned a week of what-the-heck-is-that Internet speculation. Guesses have run from a plastic bag, to a floating whale placenta — to a jellyfish. Writing on his Facebook page, Dr. Steven Haddock of JellyWatch.org identifies the creature as Deepstaria enigmatica, a jellyfish. It's not that rare, but this one is large and it's rarely seen intact. YOUTUBE.COM

PM leaves door open

Gay marriage in New Zealand?

New Zealand PM John Key has broken a silence on gay marriage and left the door open for making it legal. The opposition leader also expressed support. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Bullying

Romney cut bangs of a classmate presumed gay

U.S. Republican presidential front-runner Mitt Romney admitted on Thursday he "did some dumb things" in high school. He issued a tepid apology over revelations he bullied and physically accosted a classmate who was presumed gay.

His remarks came in the wake of a Washington Post story that quotes several former Romney schoolmates as they recall the presidential wannabe holding down a classmate and forcibly cutting his blond bangs. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Blind Chinese activist concerned for his family

Police stop a Chen Guangcheng supporter in Beijing. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Restrictions. Officials in Shandong have placed some of Chen Guangcheng's relatives under house arrest

Authorities in the hometown of blind activist Chen Guangcheng have notched up restrictions on members of his extended family while he awaits permission in Beijing to travel abroad under an agreement between China and the U.S.

Chen Guangcheng's brother and sister-in-law have been placed under house arrest, his nephew is in police detention, and another half-dozen relatives face some form of restriction on their movements in their village in Shandong province, according to Chen, his lawyers and a rights group.

Chen's flight from abusive house arrest in Shandong and into the protection of U.S. diplomats, which led to an agreement with Beijing to let him study in the U.S. accompanied by his wife and children, has exposed the impunity of local officials and embarrassed the central government.

"I feel that Shandong's retribution against me has already started," Chen said in an interview Thursday from a hospital where he is being treated for injuries suffered during his dramatic escape from his guarded farm house.

His nephew, Chen Kegui, is believed to have been detained in relation to a clash he had with officials who reportedly broke into his home after discovering that the activist had escaped in late April. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Texas. Brain surgery goes live as doctor removes benign tumour

There have been live births broadcast on the Internet, and a number of operations. Now the Memorial Hermann hospital in Houston has gone a step further and provided the first ever live-tweeted brain surgery.

The surgery was performed by Dr. Dong Kim, a leading neurosurgeon who operated on Congresswoman Gabrielle Giffords when she was shot in the head in January last year. On Wednesday, Kim removed a benign tumor from a 21-year-old woman who had consented to the broadcast.

The surgeon was joined by a social-media team that tracked and broadcast every stage from an adjacent room. The hospital received an "overwhelming response," Nicole Terry, a hospital spokeswoman told Metro, which included a total of 14-million viewers worldwide.

METRO WORLD NEWS

Tweets

- @houstonhospital @briabria – The tumor was benign. - Dr. Kim
- @houstonhospital @antmont96 – When there's a hemorrhage, the blood clot is partially absorbed. Yellow protein remains & stains the brain yellow. - Dr. Kim

Criticism

Girl scouts of USA face official inquiry

The Girl Scouts of the USA have long been a lightning rod for conservative criticism. Now they're facing their highest-level challenge: an official inquiry by the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops.

At issue are concerns about program materials that some Catholics find offensive. Last year, the Scouts angered some conservatives by accepting into a Colorado troop a seven-year-old transgender child who was born a boy but was being raised as a girl.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

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Sochi. Chechens, Georgians blamed for foiled terror plot

Russian agents have foiled terror attack plans on the Black Sea resort of Sochi, host of the 2014 Winter Olympics, authorities said Thursday, blaming Chechen separatists and neighbouring Georgia for jointly masterminding the plans.

Georgian authorities and security experts, however, called the accusations "paranoid" and "hard to believe."

Russia's National Anti-Terrorist Committee said the FSB, the successor agency to the KGB, had discovered 10 caches of weapons and ammunition on May 4 and May 5 in Georgia's breakaway republic of Abkhazia, which lies just miles from Sochi.

The arms seized included portable surface-to-air missiles, grenade launchers, flame throwers, grenades, rifles, explosives and maps, the security service said.

Authorities said the terrorists were planning to smuggle the explosives and arms into Sochi "between 2012 and 2014 to use them during the preparations and during the games."

They did not elaborate on how they came to this conclusion.

Sochi is less than dozen miles away from Russia's border with Abkhazia, a tiny province that declared independence from Georgia in 2008.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Ireland

Church rebuilding amid sex scandal

The archbishop of Dublin, a leading voice for reform following Ireland's devastating Catholic church sex-abuse scandal, says the church is trying to rebuild even as it confronts the ghosts of its past.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Europe

Merkel slams Ukraine repression

German Chancellor Angela Merkel is drawing a parallel between Ukraine and its authoritarian neighbour Belarus, saying the citizens of both countries are "still living under dictatorship and repression."

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Russian jet sales in limbo after ill-fated test flight

Sukhoi. Moscow jumps to manufacturer's defence following plane crash in Indonesia that appears to have killed 45

In this photo released by the Indonesian Air Force, the remains of a missing Sukhoi Superjet-100 are scattered on the mountainside in Bogor, West Java, Indonesia, Thursday. The new Russian-made passenger plane disappeared Wednesday during a demonstration flight. INDONESIAN AIR FORCE/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

The crash of a new, Russian-made jetliner into a jagged Indonesian volcano during a flight to impress potential buyers threw doubt on dozens of plane sales Thursday just as Moscow seeks a comeback in foreign markets. All 45 people aboard were feared dead.

Search-and-rescue teams climbed through the mist-shrouded, jungly terrain for nearly 20 hours to reach the site where the plane roared in at nearly 800 km/h Wednesday, exploding and raining debris down a nearly vertical slope.

When the weather clears, bodies will have to be hoisted by nets and ropes onto hovering choppers, said Gagah Prakoso, a spokesman for the national search-and-rescue agency.

"We're still searching for survivors," he said. "But it doesn't look good."

The Sukhoi Superjet-100 — Russia's first new model of passenger jet since the fall of the Soviet Union two decades ago — was supposed to kick-start the nation's efforts to modernize its fleet and resurrect its neglected aerospace industry.

Indonesia, the fourth stop of a six-nation "Welcome Asia!" tour, was one of Sukhoi's brightest hopes, accounting for a big chunk of the 170 orders taken globally so far.

Kartika Airlines, Sky Aviation and Queen Air — among dozens of airlines to have popped up in the nation of 240 million to meet the growing demand for cheap air travel in the last decade — together were aiming to buy at least 48.

"We will wait for the result of the investigation before making any further (purchasing) decisions," said Arifin Seman, one of the top executives at Kartika.

Krisman Tarigan, president-director of Sky, said he "wouldn't rule out cancellation if it turned out the crash occurred because the plane was not airworthy."

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

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Deadly car bombs shake Syria

Terror in Damascus. Massive blasts near government building kill 55 and further derail dwindling hopes for an end to violence

Twin suicide car bombs exploded outside a military intelligence building and killed 55 people Thursday, tossing mangled bodies in the street in the deadliest attack against a regime target since the Syrian uprising began 14 months ago.

The bombings fuelled fears of a rising Islamic militant element among the forces seeking to oust President Bashar Assad and dealt a further blow to international efforts to end the bloodshed.

The first car bomb went off on a key six-lane highway during the morning rush hour, knocking down a security wall outside the government building and drawing people to the scene, witnesses said. A much larger blast soon followed, shaking the neighbourhood, setting dozens of cars ablaze and sending up a grey mushroom cloud visible around the capital.

Flames and smoke rise from burning cars after two bombs exploded at Qazaz neighbourhood in Damascus, Syria, on Thursday. SANA NEWS|THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Syrian state TV video showed dozens of bodies, some charred or dismembered, strewn in the rubble or still inside damaged cars. An Associated Press reporter at the scene saw medics in rubber gloves picking through the site for human remains amid the two craters that were blasted into the asphalt.

The Interior Ministry, which oversees the police and security services, said 55 people were killed and more than 370 were wounded. Officials said suicide bombers detonated explosives weighing more than 1,000 kilograms.

The government blamed the attack on armed terrorists it says are driving the uprising, which has grown into the strongest threat to the Assad family dynasty in its four decades in power.

Syria's UN ambassador, Bashar Ja'afari, told the Security Council that a second bombing in Aleppo on Thursday also killed civilians and damaged property.

A leader of the Free Syrian Army, an umbrella group of anti-regime militias throughout the country, condemned the Damascus attack and denied the group was involved.

There was no immediate claim of responsibility, but a shadowy militant group calling itself the Al-Nusra Front has claimed past attacks through statements on militant websites.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Enemies of the state

The blast was the largest and most deadly yet in a series of bombings targeting state security buildings since last December.

- **Deadly Trend.** Most of these attacks have been in Aleppo and Damascus, which have generally stood by Assad.
- **Damascus targeted.** The attack was the fifth to hit Damascus since December 2011, when a car bomb killed 44 people.

International community

Officials outraged

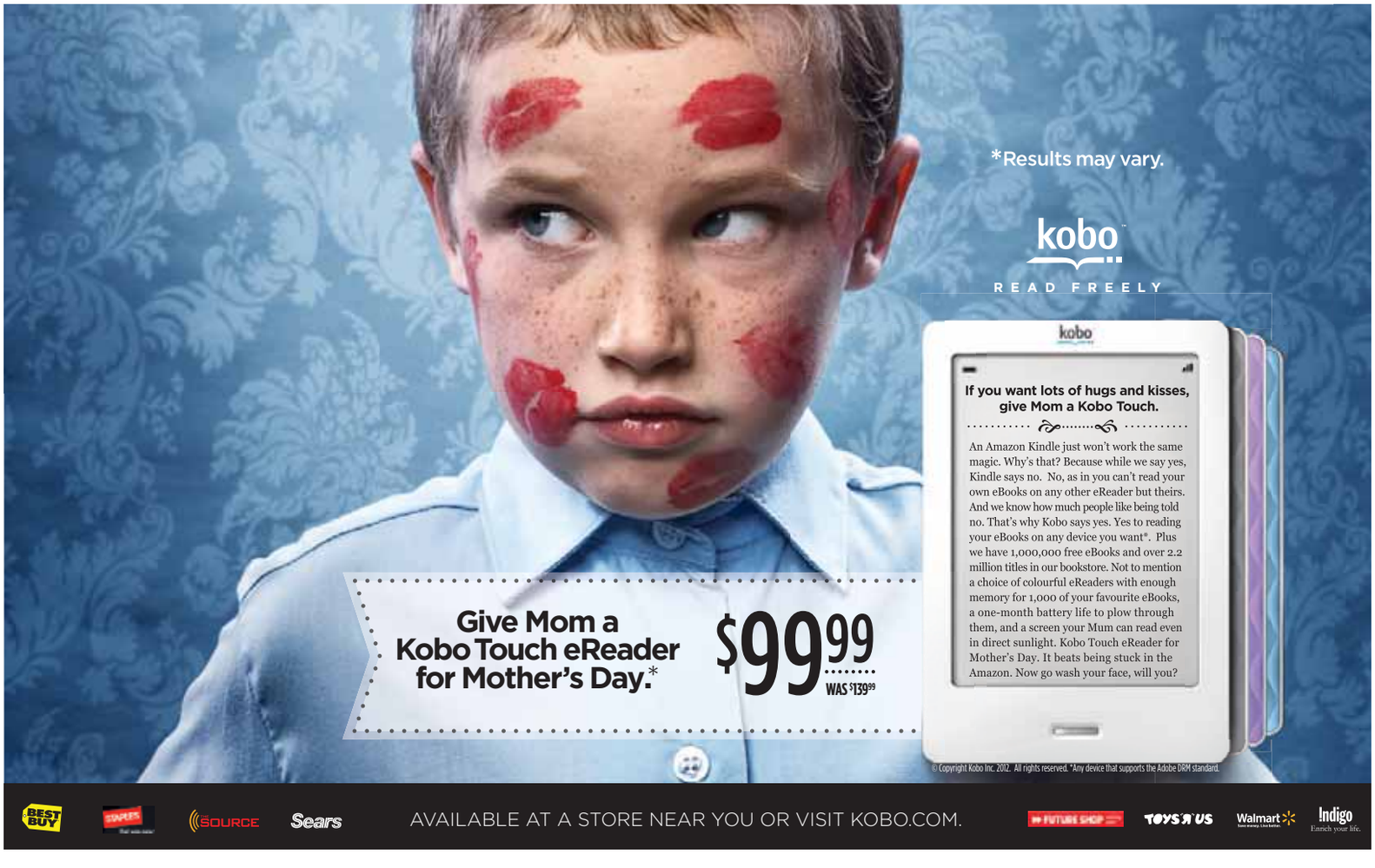
World powers seeking to halt Syria's unrest condemned the attack and urged all sides to adhere to a ceasefire brokered by UN and Arab League envoy Kofi Annan.

"In order to prevent another escalation of violence, we continue to call on the Syrian regime to fully and immediately implement the Annan plan," U.S. State Department spokeswoman Victoria Nuland said in Washington."

Maj. Gen. Robert Mood, the Norwegian head of a team of observers overseeing the ceasefire, toured the site and said the Syrian people do not deserve this "terrible violence."

"It is not going to solve any problems," he said. "It is only going to create more suffering for women and children."

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS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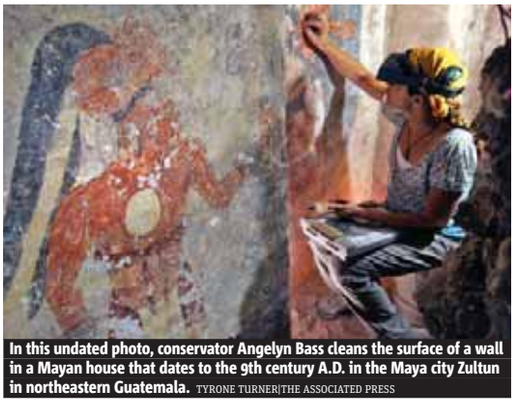
Friendly Parisian Spiderman

French urban climber Alain Robert, known as Spiderman, climbs up the 231-metre First Tower, the tallest skyscraper in France, in the La Defense business district in Courbevoie, outside Paris, on Thursday.

MICHEL EULER/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Mayan astronomy more optimistic than we thought?

Celestial calendar.
Small room inside Guatemalan ruins reveals detailed work and calls into question doomsday predictions



In this undated photo, conservator Angelyn Bass cleans the surface of a wall in a Mayan house that dates to the 9th century A.D. in the Maya city Zultun in northeastern Guatemala. TYRONE TURNER/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Archaeologists have found a small room in Mayan ruins where royal scribes apparently used walls like a blackboard to keep track of astronomical records and the society's intricate calendar some 1,200 years ago.

The walls reveal the oldest known astronomical tables from the Maya. Scientists already knew they must have been keeping such records at that time, but until now the oldest known examples dated from about 600 years later.

Astronomical records were key to the Mayan calendar, which has gotten some attention recently because of doomsday warnings that it predicts the end of the world this December. Experts say it makes no such prediction. The new finding provides a bit of backup: The calculations include a time span longer than 6,000 years, meaning it could extend well beyond 2012.

"Why would they go into those numbers if the world is going to come to an end this year?" observed Anthony Aveni of Colgate University in Hamilton, N.Y., an expert on Mayan astronomy.

Aveni, along with William Saturno of Boston University and others, report the discovery in Friday's issue of the journal Science.

The room is part of a large complex of Mayan ruins in the rain forest at Xultun in northeastern Guatemala. The walls also contain portraits of a seated king and some other figures, but it's clear those have no connection to the astronomical writings, the scientists said.

One wall contains a calendar based on phases of the moon, covering about 13 years. The researchers said they think it might have been used to keep track of which deity was overseeing the moon at particular times.

Aveni said it would allow scribes to predict the appearance of a full moon years in advance, for example. Such record-keeping was key to Mayan astrology and rituals and could have been used to advise the king on when to go to war or how good the year's crops would be, he said.

On an adjacent wall are numbers indicating four time spans from roughly 935 to 6,700 years. It's not clear what they represent, but maybe the scribes were doing calculations that combined observations from important astronomical events like the movements of Mars, Venus and the moon, the researchers said. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Written in the stars

"What you have here is astronomy driven by religion." **Anthony Aveni of Colgate University,** discussing the recent archeological discovery in Guatemala.

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NDP nips at Tory base: Poll

Poll. Jack Layton legacy continues, according to Harris Decima survey

A new poll suggests the New Democrats are widening their support across the country.

The Canadian Press Harris Decima survey indicates the NDP has 34 per cent of popular support, compared to 30 per cent for the Conservatives. With a margin of error of 2.2 percentage points, support for the parties may be equally split.

"Remember, this is a party that a decade ago, half the electorate said they would 'never' vote for," said Allan Gregg, chairman of Harris Decima. "To broaden their base as we see in these data is quite remarkable."

The Liberals continue to hold steady at 20 per cent support, the poll suggests.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Orange crush

- **Tory base.** The poll indicates the New Democrats have become competitive in traditional Tory areas, with the NDP at 31 per cent support, compared to 35 per cent for the Tories, among rural Canadians.
- **In the city.** The NDP appears to have the support of 36 per cent of urban and suburban men, a number that has risen steadily since February. Meanwhile, the Conservatives are seeing their support in that demographic hover around 29 per cent, down from close to 40 per cent four months ago.

Conservatives. Proposed bill legislates 10 years for masks worn at riots

Conservative MPs have agreed to impose a maximum 10-year prison term on protesters who wear masks during a riot.

A proposed private member's bill would make it a crime for protesters to wear a mask or disguise while participating in a riot or unlawful assembly.

The Conservative majority on a House of Commons committee that's examining the bill has taken matters a step further by doubling the proposed maximum prison term to 10 years from five.

Blake Richards, the Conservative backbencher who proposed the new legislation, has said he sees the law as being mainly preventative in nature, allowing police to step in and arrest masked participants before protests spiral out of control.

The hard-line amendment to double the maximum penalty is just the latest in a spate of government tough-on-crime measures rolled out as Conservative support appears to be slipping in public-opinion polls.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

NDP objections

- **Government MPs passed the amendment over the objections of the NDP opposition, who argue the bill is a sham because wearing a mask to commit any crime is already an offence under the Criminal Code.**

Russell Williams

MacKay apologizes over DND picture

Defence Minister Peter MacKay has apologized after a photo of convicted murderer Russell Williams appeared in a Defence Department booklet.

In a statement issued late Wednesday, MacKay said he intends to inform the families of Williams' victims "of this terrible mistake" and offer his sincere apologies "on behalf of the entire military family."

Williams, once a rising star in the military and commander of Canadian Forces Base Trenton, was sentenced to life in prison in October 2010 after pleading guilty to the murders of Cpl. Marie-France Comeau and Jessica Lloyd. He was also convicted of two sexual assaults and dozens of fetish break-ins.

The Canadian Forces stripped him of his rank after his conviction and, in a rare move, burned his uniform. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Mother's Day survey

Women pull the purse strings: poll

A new survey suggests that women control the family purse strings no matter who the breadwinner is.

The Bank of Montreal says in a new report that women are the chief financial officers of their households.

The bank study concludes that in 82 per cent of Canadian households, women are either the primary decision-maker or have equal responsibility for financial decisions.

And women now control approximately one-third of all wealth in North America, a number that appears to be increasing.

Still, the study says women remain on average less confident than men about finances. They also tend to be less prepared for retirement due to a variety of factors, including lower earnings, intermittent work histories and longer life spans. THE CANADIAN PRESS

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GETTING IN THE GAME

CANADIAN TIRE JUMPSTART CHARITIES HAS HELPED MORE THAN 400,000 KIDS PARTICIPATE IN SPORTS

Jonathan Hood spends a lot of time telling young people about his own athletic journey. For the Hamilton Tiger-Cats defensive back, sharing the lessons he has learned with others is an important part of the job. "Sports can teach you how to win and lose gracefully and how to get along with other people," he says. "It can also teach you about teamwork, group dynamics and life skills."

When Hood isn't honing his own impressive football skills, he works as a public speaker, mentor and coach. He runs a camp in the off-season that teaches young players the fundamentals of football. He's involved with the GTA Youth Athletics Club and has spearheaded MPower, an organization that provides leadership skills and mentoring for at-risk youth. Plus, he speaks to high school students every chance he gets.

These days Hood is spreading his message about sport in another way, through his involvement with Canadian Tire Jumpstart Charities. He's one of a number of elite Canadian athletes who have lent their names and images to a 12-month calendar that will raise funds for Canadian Tire Jumpstart's many sport and recreational programs.

The list of participants in the calendar is impressive. Four-time world figure-skating champion Kurt Browning, champion high jumper Nicole Forrester, Chicago Black Hawks star Jonathan Toews and hockey gold medallist Sami Jo Small were all chosen because of their continuing support for Canadian Tire Jumpstart.

Since 2005, Canadian Tire Jumpstart has helped more than 400,000 children participate in sports and recreation programs. But with one-third of Canadian families unable to enrol their children in sports programs because of cost, many kids are still missing out on the health benefits, self-esteem and camaraderie that participating in sports can offer.

Add to that the fact that budget cuts across the country mean less physical education and extracurricular activity in school. What's more, childhood obesity is dramatically on the rise, along with a general perception that neighbourhoods aren't safe places to play anymore.

Hood believes it's up to everyone in a community to do their part to support youth sports and activities. "You have to look at yourself," he says. "If you were coached and mentored when you were a kid, you are better off for it. Programs like Canadian Tire Jumpstart are opportunities to let young people achieve their dreams. We should all support that."

Jumpstart

JUMPSTART DAY IN MAY

On May 26, most Canadian Tire stores in Canada will host fun activities and draws to help raise money for their local community. Examples of this year's Jumpstart Day events include car washes, barbecues, draws and raffles.

Throughout May, Canadian Tire Jumpstart Charities is asking Canadians to donate $2 for its popular red ball in one of two new designs (a basketball and a baseball) to support Jumpstart Day. The One Million Red Ball (OneMillionRedBalls.ca) campaign kicked off on May 4. Customers can pick up a ball at Canadian Tire stores and Gas+ locations, Mark's and Pita Pit locations.

"We're challenging Canadians to raise $1 million through the sale of the balls," says Canadian Tire Jumpstart Charities president Dan Thompson.

KIDS GET A JUMPSTART ON SPORTS

Every child in Canada has the right to participate in sports and recreation activities, but many families can't afford the fees. Since Canadian Tire Jumpstart Charities was established in 2005, it has helped more than 400,000 children aged four to 18 take part in such activities as swimming, dance, tae kwon do, soccer, basketball and learn-to-bike programs.

"We cover the cost of registration, equipment and/or transportation," says Dan Thompson, the president of Canadian Tire Jumpstart Charities. "We also lend support to unique community-based initiatives aimed at increasing access to sport and recreation programs."

More than 300 local chapters across the country partner with such community organizations as Big Brothers Big Sisters, Boys & Girls Clubs, parks and recreation departments, sports associations — even the police. It means that Canadian Tire Jumpstart transforms not only a child's life, but also an entire community.

An incredible 100 per cent of customer donations go directly to help kids in financial need take part in organized sport and recreation. And any Canadian Tire Jumpstart fundraising done locally stays in that community.

Kids get so much more than the physical health benefits of exercise from playing sports or dancing. "They also gain self-confidence and learn leadership skills," says Thompson. "We want Canadians to try to imagine how different their lives might be now if they hadn't been able to do these activities when they were young."

Applications for assistance can be submitted from Jan. 15 to June 1 for spring/summer programs, and from July 1 to Nov. 1 for fall/winter programs. Applicants will be notified by their local Canadian Tire Jumpstart chapter representative if they've been approved or if more details are needed. All of the information is kept confidential.

Visit canadiantire.ca/jumpstart or call 1-877-616-6600 to learn more.

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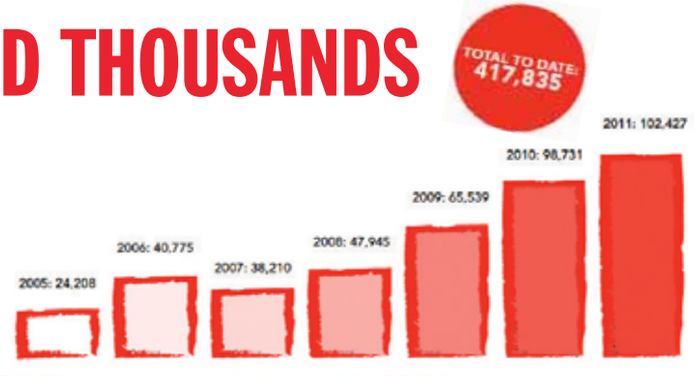

ANNUAL STREET-HOCKEY TOURNAMENT BENEFITS KIDS

The Boston Pizza/Canadian Tire Charity Street Hockey Classic began with two neighbouring businesses helping each other out. "It was Boston Pizza's idea to start the tournament," says Canadian Tire Shawnessy dealer Ron Hlady. "They approached us because we have a much bigger parking lot."

In its fourth year, the Street Hockey Classic was held on May 6, when 32 eight-person teams from around the Calgary area took part in traditional three-on-three street hockey. The teams paid $350 to enter the competition ($300 if they registered by April 1), which ran from 11:30 a.m. to 6:30 p.m.

The event featured a silent auction, a hot dog stand, a Jumpstart Hardest Shot competition, a Cold Stone Creamery ice cream stand and a "kid's zone" for families. All of the money raised (about $21,000 last year) will support Canadian Tire Jumpstart Charities.

Although the tournament is only open to competitors aged 18 and up, everyone is welcome to come out and show their support "Families love it," says Hlady. "It takes up about a third of our parking lot and creates a really great atmosphere throughout the whole store. It's organized chaos and a lot of fun."

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Nigeria

Lead poisoning still a concern

An official with Doctors Without Borders says a deadly lead-poisoning crisis in north Nigeria continues unstopped two years after the outbreak began.

The poisoning is caused by the processing of gold ore in residential compounds, where people are exposed to toxic levels of lead found in rocks. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Florida

Fallout ongoing after hazing death

The longtime director of Florida A&M University's famed marching band announced his retirement Thursday, while a top state official urged the university to keep the band suspended while investigations continue into a drum major's death.

The band, its future clouded by the beating death of Robert Champion, appeared unlikely to take the field again anytime soon.

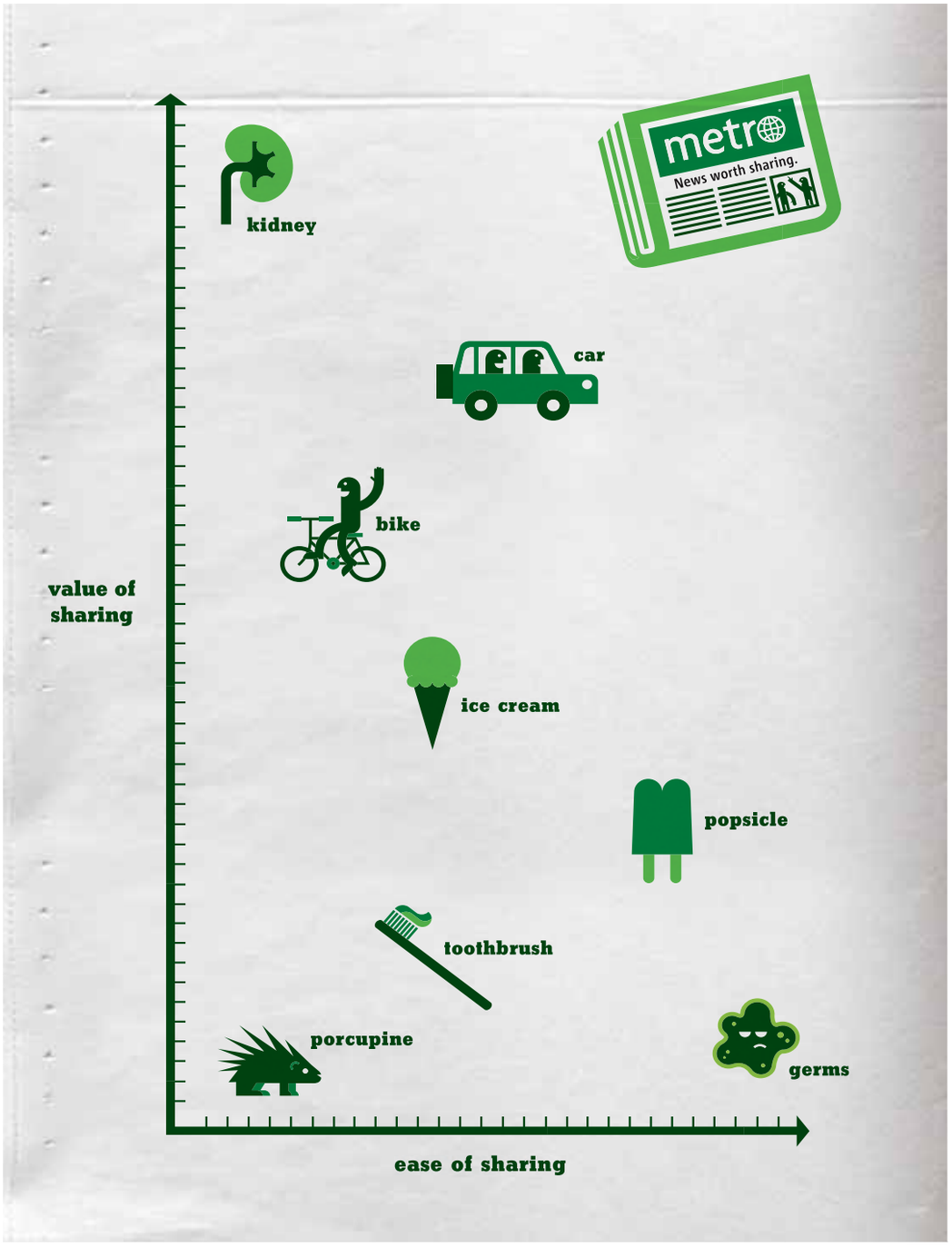
Frank Brogan, the chancellor of Florida's state-university system, wrote a blunt letter to FAMU president James Ammons urging him to keep the band suspended. Ammons was expected to discuss the fate of the band at a special meeting of the university board of trustees planned Monday.

Champion's death exposed the brutal tradition of hazing — or endurance rituals for new members of an organization — among marching bands at some U.S. colleges. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Guantanamo

Trial sought for Gitmo prisoner

A lawyer for a Palestinian man whom the U.S. military calls one of its "high-value detainees" at Guantanamo is urging the government to finally charge the man after 10 years in custody. Abu Zubaydah was accused of being the third-ranking leader of al-Qaida, but the U.S. has backed off that allegation. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS



Argentina's gender law lauded by trans activists

Identity. Government surgeons ready to offer sex-change services with no questions asked

Transgender-rights activists say Argentina now leads the world by granting people the right to change their legal and physical gender identity simply because they want to, without having to endure degrading judicial, psychiatric and medical procedures beforehand.

The gender-identity law that won congressional approval with a 55-0 Senate vote Wednesday night is the latest in a growing list of bold moves on social issues by the Argentine government, which also legalized gay marriage two years ago. These changes primarily affect minority groups, but they are fundamental, President Cristina Fernandez has said, for a democratic society still shaking off the human-rights violations of the 1976-1983 dictatorship and the paternalism of the Roman Catholic Church.

Activists and academics who have tracked gender-identity laws and customs worldwide said Thursday that no other country has gone so far to embrace gender self-determination. In the United States and Europe, transgender people must submit to physical and mental-health exams and get past a series of other hurdles before getting sex-change treatments.

Argentina's law also is the first to give citizens the right to change their legal gender without first changing their bodies, said Justus Eisfeld, co-director of Global Action for Trans Equality. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Quoted

"The fact that there are no medical requirements at all — no surgery, no hormone treatment and no diagnosis — is a real game changer and completely unique in the world. It is ... significantly ahead of even the most advanced countries."

Justus Eisfeld, co-director of Global Action for Trans Equality in New York, on Argentina's new gender-identity law.

Protesters eye constitution

A young boy participates in a protest in Katmandu, Nepal, Thursday during a general strike to pressure lawmakers drafting the Himalayan nation's new constitution not to divide the country into states based on ethnic population, which could fuel racial conflicts later. Police said they have detained more than 50 protesters who were enforcing the general strike. NIRANJAN SHRESTHA/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Woman in prostitution scandal talks

Secret-service embarassment. Colombian Dania Londono Suarez tells U.S. government her side of sordid story

Nearly four weeks after the Secret Service prostitution scandal erupted, U.S. government investigators interviewed the Colombia prostitute at the centre of the affair on Thursday, which cost eight officers and supervisors their jobs and became an election-year embarrassment for the Obama administration.

Dania Londono Suarez voluntarily met with investigators at the U.S. Embassy in Madrid, agency spokesman Edwin Donovan said. He said the Secret Service investigation was nearly complete. More than 200 people, including most of the women involved, have been interviewed in the United States and Colombia.

Londono mysteriously disappeared days after the incident and could not be reached by investigators.

In an interview from Madrid on May 4, Londono said she works as a prostitute in Colombia, catering to foreigners. She said after leaving Colombia, she went to Dubai before going to Madrid.

Londono said she met a drunken Secret Service employee at a club in Cartagena, Colombia, last month and escorted him back to his hotel after a night of partying.

"I told him it would be $800 and he said that was fine and not a problem," Londono said in Spanish. The next morning, however, the officer refused to pay, offering her only about $30 for a taxi. Londono said she was insulted and tried for several hours to get paid, eventually asking police for help.

She said the argument ended when other Secret Service officers at the Hotel Caribe paid her about $250. The officers were in Colombia in advance of President Barack Obama's arrival for a South American summit.

Prostitution is legal in Colombia. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Quoted

"I told him it would be $800 and he said that was fine."

Dania Londono Suarez, prostitute
Explaining how the now-famous transaction went down

Suarez spoke to the media in Madrid May 4. CADENA SER/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Going with Plan B. U.K. decides against F-35c

Britain's defence secretary is ditching proposals to buy a particular type of F-35 Joint Strike Fighter — reverting to an original plan previously criticized by Prime Minister David Cameron.

That option was championed by Britain's previous Labour Party government, but dumped by Cameron after he took office in 2010. At the time, Cameron said the F-35c model was "more capable, less expensive, has a longer range and carries more weapons."

Defence Secretary Philip Hammond told lawmakers Thursday that Britain would no longer purchase F-35c variants of the Lockheed Martin Corp. fighter jet because the cost of modifications to ships needed to accommodate the plane would be about $3.2 billion.

The jet's design — which does not include vertical take-off and landing — means aircraft carriers would need to be fitted with catapults.

Hammond said they would instead buy the F-35b, which doesn't need modifications to ships. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

International effort

Problems with the F-35c:

- **No vertical takeoff.** Unlike the cheaper, older F-35b
- **Huge price tag.** It would cost about $3.2 billion to accommodate them.

Historic document

Washington's letter on display

Historic correspondence by President George Washington to a Jewish congregation in Rhode Island will be the centrepiece of an exhibit in Philadelphia this summer.

The National Museum of American Jewish History said Thursday the privately owned 337-word letter is arguably the most important document in American Jewish history.

The museum says the letter was written by Washington to the Hebrew Congregation in Newport, R.I., in August 1790. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Technical problems

Jail porn? It was all a big mistake

It seems explicit sex shown on a television in a Manitoba jail was the result of a technical glitch.

Justice Minister Andrew Swan says inmates at Milner Ridge were able to see brief commercials on a TV station that was otherwise blocked by their satellite TV service.

Jail officials contacted the service provider and the problem was fixed.

The issue was raised by Manitoba Tory Justice critic Kelvin Goertzen, who says he saw about 10 inmates watching porn when he toured the jail in January. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Box office

The Hunger Games boosts Cineplex's profits

The box-office hit The Hunger Games helped fuel a dramatic boost in Cineplex Inc.'s earnings in the first quarter and with it a dividend increase for shareholders.

The first instalment of the trilogy by the same name had the highest-grossing first-quarter weekend of all time and the third-largest opening weekend of all time, Canada's largest movie theatre company said Thursday.

"A strong film slate including titles such as The Hunger Games and Dr. Seuss' The Lorax contributed to a 12.1 per cent increase in both attendance and total revenue," president and CEO Ellis Jacob said. The Hunger Games helped Cineplex post a $15.1-million profit for the quarter, improving over the $800,000 loss the company booked in the same period last year. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Technology

Samsung unwraps ultra-thin OLED TV

Samsung Electronics Co. said Thursday that it is aiming to launch flat-panel TVs using new screen technology called OLED during the second half of this year in the domestic market.

Samsung said the 55-inch TV using the ultra-thin display will be retailed at over 10 million won, or more than $9,000 US. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Kim Hyun-suk, head of Samsung's TV business, right, and a model pose with a 55-inch Samsung OLED TV during a press conference in Seoul Thursday. AHN YOUNG-JOON/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Google. Bing builds search showcase

Microsoft's Bing search engine is heading in a new direction as it drills deeper into Facebook's social network and Twitter's messaging service to showcase information unlikely to be found on Google.

The changes, unveiled Thursday, will reshape how Bing displays its search results. It represents Microsoft's most dramatic shift in Internet search since the software maker introduced Bing as a "decision engine" nearly three years ago.

Microsoft Corp. is counting on the new format to loosen Google's stranglehold on the lucrative Internet search market. In the process, Microsoft hopes to turn a profit in its online division, which has lost more than $6.3 billion US since Bing's June 2009 debut.

Bing replaced "Live Search," a mostly futile attempt to challenge Google. Microsoft touted Bing as a Google alternative that would provide more meaningful results. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

The climbing Corvette

Crews begin to remove the steel cage around a 2012 Corvette valued at $50,000 US, after they attached it to a pole 42 feet above Evansville, Ind., on Wednesday. Larry Bennett built the lot in 1970 where he first placed a brand new orange Corvette as an ornament for the dealership's business sign. The business will offer up to 200 used vehicles at the location. JASON CLARK/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Canadian farms drop 10 per cent in five years: Census

StatsCan. Agricultural census shows farmers are shifting efforts away from the cattle farming that was once the industry's backbone

Canada's agricultural landscape — once dominated by small farms and plentiful livestock — is now characterized by larger operations that focus on crop production, new census numbers suggested Thursday.

Data from Statistics Canada's 2011 census of agriculture shows the country's farmers are consolidating their operations and shifting their efforts away from the cattle farming that was once the backbone of Canadian farming.

The number of total farms shrank 10.3 per cent since the last census release in 2006, continuing a downward trend that first surfaced in 1941. The number of farm operators also dropped 10.1 per cent over the period.

Data suggests, however, that the decline in overall numbers doesn't necessarily point to a downturn in total farming.

Alfons Weersink, professor of agriculture at the University of Guelph, said digging deeper into the census data reveals a sector that's in fairly robust health.

"The last several years have been good for most of agriculture," Weersink said in a telephone interview. "Profits have been up, prices have been increased quite significantly from the last census.... There's been a significant boost up."

Weersink cites the growing number of commercial farms as evidence of the industry's strength. StatsCan said the number of farms reporting more than $1 million in gross farm receipts soared 31.2 per cent from 2006 levels. There was also a three per cent surge in the number of farms bringing in more than $500,000, which now make up 11.5 per cent of all farms in Canada.

Total gross farming receipts climbed four per cent to $51.1 billion, a fact Weersink partly attributes to high commodity and grain prices.

That same uptick partially accounts for the shift in farm production that took place over the past five years, he said. THE CANADIAN PRESS

The numbers

Although the number of farms slipped to 205,730 from 229,373 in the previous census, StatsCan said many smaller farms have been consolidated into larger operations over that five-year stretch.

- The total area of land being farmed slipped only four per cent to 160,155,748 acres, while the average farm size jumped seven per cent to 778 acres.

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Home prices in Canada may have hit peak: Experts

Housing market. National average is roughly $370,000, and Vancouver average is nearly $800,000

Most Canadians generally don't think of their homes as a potential pile of cash in the bank, but experts say it's something worth pondering now that home prices in Canada may have hit their peak.

In fact, analysts say if finance is the only consideration, conditions now and into next year or so form a seldom-seen sweet spot for using home equity as a type of asset for investment.

At about $370,000 average nationally — and just under $800,000 in Vancouver — home prices are already at record levels. Many observers believe prices are long due for a downward correction of anywhere from 10 per cent to 25 per cent, perhaps more in some of the hottest markets.

"Home prices to income, housing price to rent, all the indicators are setting off warning signals," said Derek Burleton, a senior economist with TD Bank.

"If you are purely in it for reaping profits, now is not a bad time to sell" before prices drop. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Waning demand

While there's no guarantee of a correction, observers note there are additional signs that the housing market could cool off in a big way.

- With ownership levels near a record 70 per cent, demand is expected to wane, making it a buyers' market for the first time in years.
- And Bank of Canada governor Mark Carney warned last month he was preparing to hike rates, which along with tighter lending rules being applied by federal authorities could trigger a flight from real estate.

Who will lead Tim's next?

Paul House, executive chairman, president and CEO of Tim Hortons, is pictured at the iconic coffee chain's AGM in Toronto on Thursday. House said he will stay on as the chain's interim president and CEO until December 2013. CHRIS YOUNG/THE CANADIAN PRESS

Pipeline. Pressure mounts on B.C. Liberals

B.C.'s environment minister acknowledges he's feeling the pressure to take a stand on the proposed Northern Gateway pipeline project, but he says his government is determined to keep quiet until federal environmental reviews are completed.

Environment Minister Terry Lake said Thursday the province's silence on the pipeline decision created a demand for clarity that the government was willing to withstand.

But he added: "We feel the pressure, of course we do, but it's not responsible to take a position before all that evidence is before us and then we can make the best decision in the interests of all British Columbians."

Lake said it's still early in the review process and he is cautious about stating a position.

"I don't feel really rushed to do it," he said. "You feel the political pressure to comment on it, but I think we have to be responsible and get all the information before we take a position."

Environmental groups, First Nations and B.C.'s Opposition New Democrats have come out firmly against the $5.5-billion Enbridge plan to pipe Alberta oil to north-coast B.C. and ship the oil to Asia on supertankers.

On the other side, the federal and Alberta governments also haven't been shy about touting the project's potential economic benefits to Canada.

The B.C. government, however, has remained silent and all indications are it will remain so. THE CANADIAN PRESS

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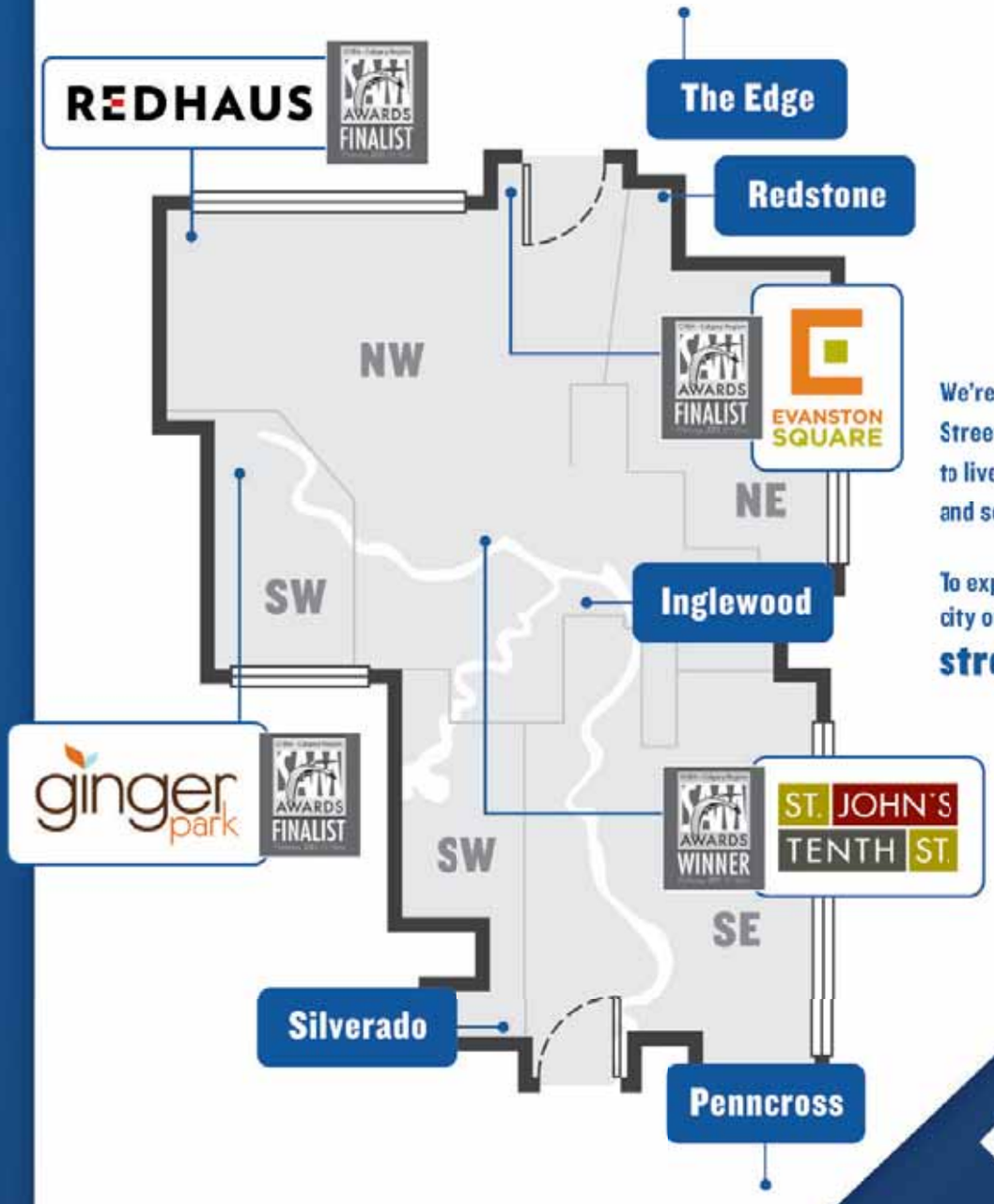

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DICTATOR GOING TO BE A RIOT

THE LIST
Neil Morton
Metro

1 **Steve (GM) Nash:** Canada's men's national basketball team is in great hands after the announcement that two-time NBA MVP Steve Nash has been named general manager. What would make things even sweeter is if the Victoria native, who is a free agent this off-season, signs with the Toronto Raptors. Captain Canada. Captain Toronto.

2 **Walk a mile in her shoes:** This International Men's March to stop rape, sexual assault and gender violence gives men, women and families the opportunity to raise awareness in their communities about the impact of sexualized violence by walking in women's high-heeled shoes.
Join a walk in your community or start your own by visiting walkamileinhershoes.org.

3 **The Dictator:** Admiral General Shabazz Aladeen is a dictator from the Republic of Wadiya and appeared on the Today Show with Matt Lauer this week with a handful of guards, and made some threatening remarks. Luckily General Aladeen is actually actor Sacha Baron Cohen, who was promoting his new comedy The Dictator, which opens May 16. Go see it. It will be a riot.

4 **Emily is back:** Emily Maynard, whose romance with former bachelor Brad Womack did not work out after he proposed to her, is the new Bachelorette. It premieres Monday May 14, and suitors include a data destruction specialist — fitting for the show, perhaps, with its high percentage of failed romances. Heck, even its host Chris Harrison recently announced he's splitting from his wife.

5 **Mark Zuckerberg's b-day:** Billionaire boy Mark Zuckerberg, the founder of Facebook — one of the most powerful brands on the planet (and soon to go IPO) — turns the ripe old age of 28 this Sunday. Before he hits 30, I predict Zuckerberg will create a transporter that will beam us up to other planets. We can share those planetary pics on Facebook.

6 **Desperate Housewives finale:** The now iconic Wisteria Lane will be no more after this Sunday when Desperate Housewives bids adieu to fans in a two-hour finale. Many former cast members will be returning for this tear-fest. The only consolation is knowing that there are still so many real-life desperate housewives we can continue to gossip about.

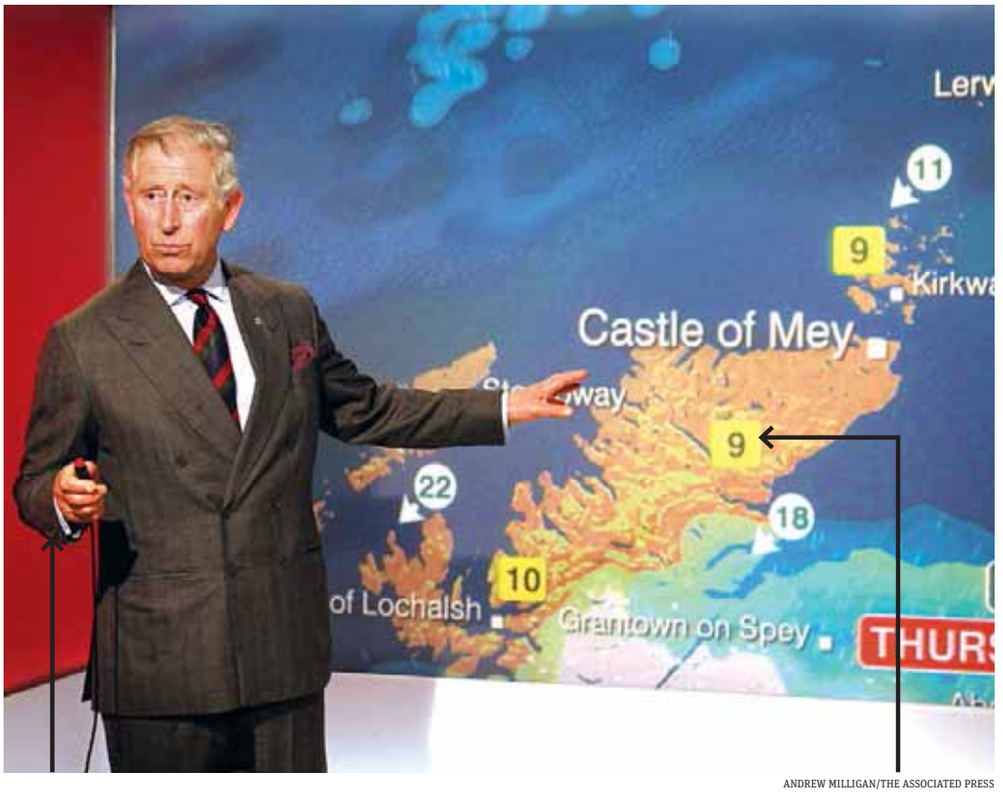
7 **Klout:** Klout.com, a social app that measures your social media reach, is all the talk right now with the cool kids. If you have a high "klout" score (the highest you can get is 100 — only Justin Bieber has that), the more influential you are online. I have no idea what my "klout" score is, but please follow me @neilmorton, tweet at me, and re-tweet my tweets and I won't be as scared to look.

8 **Chris Rumble:** This leukemia patient/young filmmaker/hero at Seattle Children's Hospital created an amazing video, Stronger: Seattle Children's Hospital starring (and empowering) fellow cancer patients who are going through painful chemotherapy. Performed to Kelly Clarkson's song Stronger, the video has gone viral on YouTube this week. Brilliant.

9 **Copenhagen Philharmonic ... in the subway:** The Copenhagen Philharmonic Orchestra did a terrific flash mob in the Copenhagen Metro subway, and the video already has nearly a million views this week. With flash mobs becoming ubiquitous, I'm thinking of starting a 24-7 flash mob that never stops flash-mobbing in a grand social experiment. Watch out.

British actor Sacha Baron Cohen arrives for the world premiere of The Dictator on Thursday in London. JONATHAN SHORT/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

It's reigning



ANDREW MILLIGAN/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Royal weather

Britons get a surprise on BBC

If this king thing doesn't work out, Prince Charles may be able to fall back on a budding career as a weatherman.

The heir to the British throne and his wife Camilla gave it a try Thursday, each reading out weather reports during a visit to BBC studios in Glasgow, Scotland.

The sight of the nattily dressed Charles giving a credible performance in the unfamiliar role caused many Britons to do a double-take as he read the lunchtime news weather spot.

The prince delivered a nearly perfect performance.

Palace officials say Charles and Camilla were visiting the studios to mark the 60-year anniversary of BBC TV Scotland. The visit was also part of the pair's annual Holyrood week.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Camilla, the Duchess of Cornwall, reads the weather on the BBC. ANDREW MILLIGAN/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Just kidding

"There's potential for a few flurries over Balmoral. Who the hell wrote this script?"

The heir to the throne ad-libbed while reading the afternoon weather report.

Metropolitan Panel

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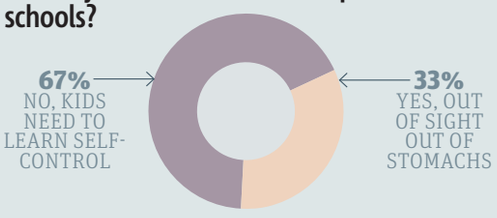
Should junk food be banned in public schools?



Twitter

@StevenLuft: Got my #UFC149 in #YYC presale tickets! Row 7 on the floor...only $725 each. #NoBigDeal

@__KayLi: Bbrrr!!!! The sunshine is so deceiving today! Why is #yyc so cold

@Jaicin: Was lucky and got a few tix to see #ufc149 in #yyc!! can't wait to see hometown fighters like @Promise_RiiNG kick some ass! :o)

@Paulinaski: This summer's personal food project: Find the best burger in Calgary. First stop @AlleyBurger. #ProjectBurger #YYC

@derekmancini: Sometimes I feel that summer in Calgary is like "where's Waldo" you think you found him and it's old man winter with his cane #yyc

@Clover_Girl: It's my one-year Twitterversary! Send gifts. #yyc

metro

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Will Prometheus live up to its artistic and creepy space opera potential? HANDOUT

The hot flicks of summer

Reel Guys

RICHARD CROUSE AND MARK BRESLIN

Preview. Crouse and Breslin share their picks for popcorn season — Prometheus and The Dark Knight Rises top the list

Richard: Mark, as summer movie titles go, Abraham Lincoln: Vampire Hunter has to be the grabbiest. Either that or Piranha 3DD. Both sound like fun Saturday afternoon matinees, but for nighttime viewing I think I'm most looking forward to Prometheus, the sort-of prequel to Alien. It's Ridley Scott in sci-fi mode, which means we can expect an artistic and creepy space opera with cool effects and a face-hugger or two.

Mark: Yes, I'm looking forward to Prometheus as well. But am I foolish to secretly count down the days to Rock of Ages, the '80s hair-metal musical? I avoided the live show but the trailer looked like a hoot! C'mon, Richard — Tom Cruise in a blond shag rockin' out to Foreigner hits? The art of cinema just doesn't get any better!

RC: I hope Rock of Ages is as loud and proud as the music it covers. Forget 3D for this one, give me Odorama! I want to smell the gallons of Aqua Net it must have taken to give Alec Baldwin that hair! Also likely on the loud and proud side should be The Bourne Legacy. Jeremy Renner is stepping in for Matt Damon who made the character famous. Renner is all kinds of awesome, but let's see if he can duke out like Damon.

MB: Reboots make me nervous, Richard. They work too hard or not hard enough.

Synopsis

Everybody knows the official first day of summer is Wednesday June 20, but in movie theatres the silly season actually starts earlier. In fact, it began last weekend with the release of The Avengers, the boffo superhero movie that kicked off the balmy blockbuster season. This week the Reel Guys have a look at the superhero stories, remakes, reboots, reimaginings and more we'll be watching during air conditioner season.

Which brings us to Total Recall, one of my favourite dystopian sci-fi films. Will it be better than the Schwarzenegger version? Worse? Will Colin Farrell run for governor someday? Don't know, but I can't wait to see it. Also Ted, the talking, wisecracking, R-rated teddy bear movie. If this were not Seth Macfarlane's movie, I'd totally avoid it, but the trailer is hysterical!

RC: The red band trailer for Ted made me laugh harder than almost anything else I've seen this year. It'll be rude and crude, but I think Mark Wahlberg is an underrated comic actor, so I'm excited. I can't believe we've gotten to this point and haven't mentioned the caped elephant in the room, The Dark Knight Rises. I saw six minutes of this on an IMAX screen and it made my mind grapes tingle. And I cannot wait to see the rest.

MB: It will be the movie of the summer, the box office hit of the year, and turn Tom Hardy into a household name. I'll probably camp out in line the night before it opens.

2 SCENE

Celebrity buzz

Brand returns

Russell Brand is returning to the MTV stage. The 36-year-old comedian has signed on to host the 2012 MTV Movie Awards. "This MTV Movie Awards will be more impressive than The Avengers, and you won't have to wait an hour for someone to Hulk out," Brand said Thursday. After hosting MTV's Video Music Awards in 2008 and 2009, Brand took on leading roles in films such as Get Him to the Greek, Arthur and Rock of Ages, which hits theatres next month. This is his first time hosting the MTV Movie Awards

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

On the web

Ubisoft assembling Avengers video game for Kinect, Wii U

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The Avengers 2: The dream team

Who will appear in the sequel? We guess which characters, and the actors who should play them. Captain America, Iron Man, Thor, the Hulk, Hawkeye and Black Widow may have made an impressive roster in The Avengers, but there are more superheroes that are up to the task of saving Earth. In honour of The Avengers 2, announced this week, here are some other characters that have claimed affiliation with the Avengers at one point in Marvel's history. **METRO WORLD NEWS**

Ant-Man

Powers
He can grow or shrink to any size. Also, he can control an army of ants telepathically.

Who should play him
Simon Pegg. He showed us he can play the nerdy mathematician role in Star Trek, which means he would probably make a good nerdy scientist.

Likelihood this is going to happen
There's already an Ant-Man movie in the works with director Edgar Wright penning the script alongside Joe Cornish. Seeing that Pegg and Wright are frequent collaborators, we think — well hope — we'll see this tiny crusader in the next giant blockbuster. Plus, he co-founded The Avengers team. He deserves a spot.

The Wasp

Powers
Just like her partner/husband/ex-husband/romantic interest, she can also alter her physical size. At her wasp size, she grows wings which help her fly and has "stinger blasts," or powerful electrical bursts. She also has limited abilities to communicate with insects.

Who should play her
Alexis Bledel. She's got that retro glam that would work well with Wasp's look.

Likelihood this is going to happen
You can't have Ant-Man without the Wasp. She's the other co-founder of The Avengers so it would be nice to see her on the big screen.

Wolverine

Powers
Besides his accelerated healing process, he's got an adamantium-bonded skeleton. Plus, you don't want to get in the way of his claws.

Who should play him
Hugh Jackman. He's the definitive Wolverine.

Likelihood this is going to happen
Sadly, because Wolverine has already starred in 20th Century Fox movies and the rights to that character is owned by the studio, it's unlikely that he'll be allowed to appear in a Disney/Paramount/Marvel property. But, one can dream.

Venom

Powers
He's basically another version of Spider-Man — except super evil and much stronger.

Who should play him
Jason Statham. Definitely not Topher Grace.

Likelihood this is going to happen
Venom was already in Spider-Man 3, which was distributed by Sony, so the character faces the Wolverine dilemma. However, one could argue that this Venom is a technically different character, so who knows.

ALL PHOTOS GETTY IMAGES

Black Panther

Powers
Superhuman senses that give him ultimate strength, speed, stamina and agility to the peak of human development, and an arsenal of Wakandan technological and military items make him a formidable foe. Plus, he's one of the eight smartest people on the planet.

Who should play him
Lenny Kravitz. He can pull off all those moves while remaining super cool.

Likelihood this is going to happen
Black Panther would definitely bring a much needed level-headed component to the team. There's also an upcoming film supposedly in the works starring the character, so we're rooting for him.

Ms. Marvel

Powers
She's got superhuman strength, endurance, stamina, flight, physical durability, some precognitive abilities and a resistance to most toxins and poisons. Basically, you can't destroy her — and the fact that she's part Kree makes her a great alien-human liaison.

Who should play her
Uma Thurman. She already looks like an Amazon woman.

Likelihood this is going to happen
Ms. Marvel hasn't been in any other property, and as much as Black Widow could hold her own alongside the boys. We'd love to see another female Avenger kicking butt next to her.

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Sir Ben Kingsley brings a touch of class to Sacha Baron Cohen's comedy

The Dictator. From Gandhi to General Aladeen's uncle — Kingsley is always up for a challenge

HEIDI PATALANO
Metro World News in New York

The man who played Gandhi has portrayed many other heavy characters throughout his long career, but a king of comedy he's never been. Sir Ben Kingsley is the first to own up to this, but it seems worth a shot in order to work with a man whom he mentions in the same breath as Charlie Chaplin.

"The great ones, like Chaplin and Sacha Baron Cohen make it look effortless," he says.

"It's not effortless."

In the latest film from the man responsible for Ali G, Borat and Bruno, Sir Kingsley portrays the menacing uncle of Admiral General Aladeen (Cohen), the dictator of fictional African nation Wadiya. Though he's not dropping the one-liners the way Baron Cohen gets to, this English actor brings an air of sophistication to the film.

With any Sacha Baron Cohen project, the humour comes out of how truthful it is. What's the most important 'serious message' in the film?

I am hoping personally that it will reveal in people perhaps some hidden fears or prejudices. ... (Baron Cohen and his creative team) voice certain phobias, prejudices. … It might cause people to feel resentment, not offense, because Sacha's character is saying things that, if they said it, they would be arrested or lose their job, but they are capable of saying those things. I think that's where satire is really valuable. Those that are made to feel uncomfortable will feel resentful that in their enforced political correctness, they're not allowed to be anti-Semitic. 'Like, why can that f—ker up there say it and if I say it, I'll lose my job!'"

You got to spend a lot of time holding Baron Cohen's hand throughout the film. How was that for you?

That is the relationship, you see. I am his uncle, and I know that he's still a child, so whatever street he has to cross, be it in the UN or arriving in New York, or going to a nuclear facility, he's crossing a street. I know he's a total idiot and I've done nothing to further his education, or his well being. It's better for my character, the uncle, to infantilize and keep him there.

Sacha Baron Cohen was responsible for Borat which many have said was one of the best movies of the last decade, but it did not receive a Best Picture Oscar nomination. Why do comedies never win that category?

I think there's this misconception that's completely understandable, that comedy is easy — that we're basically having fun. All we're doing is fooling around in front of a camera. I could talk for years trying to dispel this myth but nobody wants to hear it. Sacha was talking to me about the science of comedy — how he numerically grades from one to ten, the value of a certain reaction. Where it is in the film, in the editing, whether to go for two sevens or cut them and go for a ten and always to keep poking at the nerve ... that prejudiced nerve.

So then would you put this performance on par with playing Gandhi?

My body chemistry changes to the same degree on the word action, no matter what I'm doing. Whether it's a marathon or a series of sprints, I still have to use the same muscles, so I can't really differentiate.

Ben Kingsley plays uncle to Sacha Baron Cohen's character General Aladeen in The Dictator. HANDOUT

Drama

Keyhole

Director. Guy Maddin

Stars. Jason Patric, Isabella Rossellini, Udo Kier

Canadian surrealist Maddin goes digital but doesn't sacrifice a shred of his vision in Keyhole, a haunting, visually informed work of bizarre, muted power. Jason Patric (The Lost Boys) stars as Ulysses, a man who must face the horrors and ghosts of his past inside the confines of his own house, including the specter of his long dead wife (played by Maddin muse Isabella Rossellini). Part expressionist poem, part classic Hollywood quote and all Maddin, there will be nothing else like it onscreen this year.

CHRIS ALEXANDER

Comedy

Dark Shadows

Director. Tim Burton

Stars. Johnny Depp, Michelle Pfeiffer, Eva Green

Watching Tim Burton's big budget cinematic relaunch of Dan Curtis' cult '60s daytime soap opera Dark Shadows is like being trapped in some sort of drug laced alternate universe … and that's a good thing. Burton casts his muse Johnny Depp as vampire Barnabas Collins, who is freed from his coffin in 1972 after being put there by his spurned lover centuries before. How he copes with a disenfranchised America and his ancestors is campy fun for sure. Outside of the surrealism, this is really just a soap opera after all. It's also one of the bravest, weirdest studio films this critic has ever seen.

CHRIS ALEXANDER

Drama

Footnote

Director. Joseph Cedar

Stars. Shlomo Bar-Aba, Lior Ashkenazi, Aliza Rosen

Israel's 2012 Foreign Language Oscar entry is an intriguing, nerve jangling and oppressively narrow story that would be funny if it weren't so pathetic. Israeli father and son academics are torn apart by a national prize; the elder doggedly pursued Talmudic theories for 30 years only to have them made redundant when a colleague scooped him. In his obsessive, paranoid misery, he sees his son as his real rival. Things get a lot worse in grandly academic and hilariously lowbrow ways.

ANNE BRODIE

THESE PAGES COVER MOVIE START TIMES FROM FRI., MAY 11 TO THURS., MAY 17. TIMES ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE. COMPLETE LISTINGS ARE ALSO AVAILABLE AT METRONEWS.CA/MOVIES.

Canyon Meadows
Bay 110 13226 Macleod Trail,
403-670-5444

Dr. Seuss' the Lorax (G) Fri-Thu 1:30-4:05-7:10
Friends With Kids (14A) Fri-Thu 1:10-4:05-7:15-9:40
Goon (18A) Fri-Thu 9:35
John Carter (PG) Fri-Thu 12:55-4-8
Journey 2: The Mysterious Island (PG) Fri-Thu 1:05-3:45-7:20-9:50
Safe House (14A) Fri-Thu 1:25-4-7-9:40
The Secret World of Arrietty (G) Fri-Thu 1:15-4:10-7:05
Silent House (14A) Fri-Thu 1-9:40
This Means War (PG) Fri-Thu 12:50-4:10-7:05-9:45
The Three Stooges (PG) Fri-Thu 1:35-3:55-7:25-9:45
Tinker Tailor Soldier Spy (STC) Fri-Thu 3:50-6:50
The Vow (PG) Fri-Thu 1:20-3:55-7:30-9:50
We Need to Talk About Kevin (14A) Fri-Thu 9:30

Crowfoot Crossing
91 Crowfoot Terrace,
403-547-3316

21 Jump Street (14A) Fri 2:20-5-7:40-10:20 Sat 11:40-2:20-5-7:40-10:20 Sun 2:20-5-7:40-10:20 Mon-Tue 2:15-4:50-7:30-10:15 Wed 2:15-4:50-10:15 Thu 2:15-4:50-7:30-10:15
Chicken Run (G) Sat 11
Chimpanzee (G) Fri-Sun 11:45-1:50-4-6:10-8:20 Mon-Thu 1:25-3:30-5:35-7:50
Dark Shadows (14A) No Passes Fri-Sat 12-2:40-5:20-8-10:40 No Passes Sun 11:50-2:30-5:10-7:50-10:30 No Passes Mon-Tue 2:20-5-7:40-10:20 No Passes Wed 1-5-7:40-10:20 No Passes Thu 2:20-5-7:40-10:20
The Dictator (14A) No Passes Wed-Thu 1-3:10-5:20-7:35-9:50
The Five-Year Engagement (14A) Fri-Sun 1:45-4:40-7:35-10:30 Mon-Tue 1:15-4:15-7:15-10:10 Wed 4:15-7:15-10:10 Thu 1:15-4:15-7:15-10:10 Star & Strollers Screening Wed 1
The Hunger Games (14A) Fri-Sat 1-4:10-7:30-10:35 Sun 12:40-3:50-7-10:10 Mon-Thu 12:40-4-7:10-10:25
The Lucky One (PG) Fri-Sat 12:30-3-5:30-8-10:30 Sun 12:15-2:45-5:15-7:45-10:15 Mon-Thu 1:30-4:30-7-9:25
Marvel's the Avengers (PG) No Passes Fri-Sun 12:15-3:35-6:55-10:15 No Passes Mon-Thu 12:30-3:40-6:50-10:05
Marvel's the Avengers 3D (PG) No Passes Fri 11:45-12:45-2:35-3:05-4:05-5:55-6:25-7:25-9:15-9:45-10:45 No Passes Sat 11:15-11:45-12:45-2:35-3:05-4:05-5:55-6:25-7:25-9:15-9:45-10:45 No Passes Sun 11:45-2-2:35-3:05-5:15-5:55-6:25-8:30-9:15-9:45 No Passes Mon-Thu 12:45-1-2-3:55-4:10-5:15-7:05-7:20-8:30-10:15-10:30
The Pirates! Band of Misfits (G) Fri-Sun 1 Mon-Thu 12:45
The Pirates! Band of Misfits 3D (G) Fri-Sun 3:15-5:30-7:45-10 Mon-Thu 3-5:25-7:45-10
The Raven (18A) Fri-Sun 10:25 Mon-Tue 9:55
Safe (14A) Fri 2-4:20-7-9:30 Sat 11:30-2-4:20-7-9:30 Sun 2-4:20-7:10-9:30 Mon-Tue 1:50-4:20-6:55-9:30 Wed-Thu 9:55
A Streetcar Named Desire (STC) Wed 7
Eau Claire Market
200 Barlay Parade, 403-263-3166
Damsels in Distress (PG) Fri 6:50-9:30 Sat-Sun 12:50-3:50-6:50-9:30 Mon-Tue 6-8:50 Wed-Thu 6-9:30
Dark Shadows (14A) No Passes Fri 7:10-10:10 No Passes Sat-Sun 1:10-4:10-7:10-10:10 No Passes Mon-Thu 6:10-9:10
The Five-Year Engagement (14A) Fri 6:40-9:40 Sat-Sun 12:30-3:40-6:40-9:40 Mon-Wed 5:40-8:30 Thu 5:30-8:30
The Hunger Games (14A) Fri 6:30-9:50 Sat-Sun 12:20-3:25-6:30-9:50 Mon-Tue 5:30-8:40 Wed 9 Thu 8:40
Marvel's the Avengers 3D (PG) No Passes Fri 7-10:20 No Passes Sat-Sun 12:40-4-7-10:20 No Passes Mon-Thu 5:50-9
Salmon Fishing in the Yemen (PG) Fri 7:20-10 Sat-Sun 1-4:15-7:20-10 Mon-Tue 6:20-9:20 Wed 6:25-9:20 Thu 6:20-9:20

Empire Studio 16
Country Hills
388 Country Hills Blvd.,
403-686-8491

21 Jump Street (14A) Stadium Seating, SR Dolby Digital Fri-Sun 1:10-4:15-7:10-10:05 Stadium Seating, SR Dolby Digital Mon-Thu 4:15-7:10-10:05
American Reunion (18A) SR Dolby Digital, Stadium Seating Fri-Sun 1-3:45-7:20-10:15 SR Dolby Digital, Stadium Seating Mon-Thu 3:45-7:20-10:15
The Cabin in the Woods (18A) Stadium Seating, SR Dolby Digital Fri-Sun 1:30-4:25-7:40-10:15 Stadium Seating, SR Dolby Digital Mon-Thu 4:25-7:40-10:15
Chimpanzee (G) Stadium Seating, SR Dolby Digital Fri-Sun 1:15-3:25 Stadium Seating, SR Dolby Digital Mon-Tue 3:25
Dark Shadows (14A) Stadium Seating, SR Dolby Digital, No Passes Fri-Sun 12:50-1:20-4-4:30-7:05-7:25-9:45-10 Stadium Seating, SR Dolby Digital, No Passes Mon-Tue 4-4:30-7:05-7:25-9:45-10 Stadium Seating, SR Dolby Digital, No Passes Wed-Thu 3:30-4-6:40-7:05-9:30-9:45
Dark Shadows: The IMAX Experience (14A) Stadium Seating, SR Dolby Digital, No Passes Fri-Sun 12:20-10:20 Stadium Seating, SR Dolby Digital, No Passes Mon-Tue 10:20 Stadium Seating, SR Dolby Digital, No Passes Wed-Thu 4:30-10:20
The Dictator (14A) Stadium Seating, SR Dolby Digital Wed-Thu 3:15-3:45-7:10-7:35-9:35-10
The Five-Year Engagement (14A) Stadium Seating, SR Dolby Digital Fri-Sun 12:55-4:05-6:55-9:50 Stadium Seating, SR Dolby Digital Mon-Thu 4:05-6:55-9:50
The Hunger Games (14A) SR Dolby Digital, Stadium Seating Fri-Sun 12:25-3:35-6:50-9:55 SR Dolby Digital, Stadium Seating Mon-Thu 3:35-6:50-9:55
The Lucky One (PG) Stadium Seating, SR Dolby Digital Fri-Sun 12:30-3:30-7:30-10 Stadium Seating, SR Dolby Digital Mon-Thu 3:30-7:30-10
Marvel's the Avengers (PG) Stadium Seating, SR Dolby Digital, No Passes Fri-Sun 1:10-4:20-7:45 Stadium Seating, SR Dolby Digital, No Passes Mon-Tue 4:20-7:45 Stadium Seating, SR Dolby Digital Wed-Thu 5-8:10
Marvel's the Avengers 3D (PG) Stadium Seating, SR Dolby Digital, No Passes Fri-Sun 12:10-12:40-3:20-3:50-6:30-7-9:40-10:10 Stadium Seating, SR Dolby Digital, No Passes Mon-Tue 3:20-3:50-6:30-7-9:40-10:10 Stadium Seating, SR Dolby Digital Wed-Thu 3:20-3:50-6:30-7-9:40-10:10
Marvel's the Avengers: An IMAX 3D Experience (PG) Stadium Seating, SR Dolby Digital, No Passes Fri-Tue 3-7:15 Stadium Seating, SR Dolby Digital Wed-Thu 7:15
Mirror Mirror (G) Stadium Seating, SR Dolby Digital Fri-Sun 12-3:10 Stadium Seating, SR Dolby Digital Mon-Thu 3:10
The Pirates! Band of Misfits (G) Stadium Seating, SR Dolby Digital Fri-Sun 12:35
The Pirates! Band of Misfits 3D (G) Stadium Seating, SR Dolby Digital Fri-Thu 3:40-6:45-9:10 Stadium Seating, SR Dolby Digital Wed 1
The Raven (18A) Stadium Seating, SR Dolby Digital Fri-Sun 1:25-4:10-7:35-10:25 Stadium Seating, SR Dolby Digital Mon-Tue 4:10-7:35-10:25
Safe (14A) Stadium Seating, SR Dolby Digital Fri-Thu 7:25-9:50
Vicky Donor (PG) Stadium Seating, SR Dolby Digital Fri-Tue 6:40-9:30

Empire Studio 10
MacLeod Trail
100-16061 MacLeod Trail,
403-974-0470

21 Jump Street (14A) Digital Presentation, Stadium Seating Fri-Thu 9:30 Dark Shadows (14A) Digital Presentation, Stadium Seating Fri-Thu 12:15-3:15-7:40-10:20
The Dictator (14A) Digital Presentation, Stadium Seating Wed-Thu 12:45-4:15-7:45-10:15
The Five-Year Engagement (14A) Digital Presentation, Stadium Seating Fri-Thu 12:10-3:20-7-9:50
The Hunger Games (14A) Digital Presentation, Stadium Seating Fri-Thu 1:30-4:45-8:15
The Lucky One (PG) Digital Presentation, Stadium Seating Fri-Thu 1:45-4:40-7:30-10
Marvel's Avengers Assemble 3D (PG) Digital Presentation, Stadium Seating Fri-Thu 12-12:45-1-3:30-4:15-4:30-6:50-8-8:30-10:10 Digital Presentation, Stadium Seating Fri-Thu 12:30-4-7:20-10:30
Marvel's the Avengers (PG) Digital Presentation, Stadium Seating Fri-Thu 11:30-3-6:20-9:40
The Pirates! Band of Misfits (G) Digital Presentation, Stadium Seating Fri-Thu 1:15
The Pirates! Band of Misfits 3D (G) Digital Presentation, Stadium Seating Fri-Tue 3:45-6:30 Digital Presentation, Stadium Seating Wed-Thu 3:45

Globe Cinema
617-8 Avenue,
403-262-3308

Bully (PG) Fri 7-9:20 Sat-Sun 1-3:20-7-9:20 Mon-Thu 7-9:20
Footnote (STC) Fri 6:50-9:10 Sat-Sun 12:50-3:10-6:50-9:10 Mon-Thu 6:50-9:10

Moviedome
1039 999 36 St. N.E.,
403-248-2000

Dr. Seuss' the Lorax (G) Fri-Thu 12:55-3:50-6:55-10:05
Ghost Rider: Spirit of Vengeance (14A) Fri-Thu 12:45-3:30-7:05-9:50
John Carter (PG) Fri-Thu 12:40-4-7:30
Journey 2: The Mysterious Island (PG) Fri-Thu 12:50-3:45-6:40-9:55
Safe House (14A) Fri-Thu 6:45-9:30
The Secret World of Arrietty (G) Fri-Thu 1:05-3:40
Silent House (14A) Fri-Thu 1:15-4:05-7:15-9:35
The Three Stooges (PG) Fri-Thu 1-3:55-7:10-10
Wanderlust (14A) Fri-Thu 1:10-3:35-6:50-9:45
The Woman in Black (14A) Fri-Thu 12:45-3:45-7-9:40

Scotiabank Chinook
6455 MacLeod Trail,
403-212-8994

21 Jump Street (14A) Fri-Thu 12:10-2:40-5:10-7:40-10:10
American Reunion (18A) Fri-Sun 11:30-2:05-4:45-7:20-10:05 Mon-Thu 2:05-4:45-7:20-10:05
The Cabin in the Woods (18A) Fri-Thu 1:15-3:30-5:45-8:10-10:25
Chicken Run (G) Sat 11
Dark Shadows (14A) No Passes Fri-Thu 12-2:40-5:30-8:10-10:45
Dark Shadows: The IMAX Experience (14A) No Passes Fri-Thu 2-10:30
The Dictator (14A) No Passes Wed-Thu 11:55-2:05-4:20-6:35-8:50-11:05
The Hunger Games (14A) Fri 12:40-4-7-10:05 Sat 12:35-4-7-10:05 Sun-Thu 12:40-4-7-10:05
The Lucky One (PG) Fri-Wed 11:45-2:30-5:25-8-10:20 Thu 3:25-5:40-8-10:20 Star & Strollers Screening Thu 1
Marvel's the Avengers (PG) No Passes Fri-Wed 12-3:20-6:40-10 No Passes Thu 4:20-7:30-10:40 Star & Strollers Screening, No Passes Thu 1
Marvel's the Avengers 3D (PG) No Passes Fri-Sun 10:45-12:30-1:10-1:50-3:50-4:20-4:55-7:10-7:30-8-10:15-10:40-11:05 No Passes Mon-Tue 11:45-12:30-1:10-2:50-3:50-4:20-5:55-7:10-7:30-9:20-10:15-10:40 No Passes Wed 11:40-12:30-1:10-2:45-3:50-4:20-5:55-7:10-7:30-9:20-9:40-10:40 No Passes Thu 11:45-12-12:30-2:50-3:20-3:50-5:55-6:40-7:10-9:20-10-10:15
Marvel's the Avengers: An IMAX 3D Experience (PG) No Passes Fri-Sun 11-4:30-7:30 No Passes Mon-Thu 4:30-7:30
The Metropolitan Opera: Die Walk¸re Encore (STC) Sat 10
Mirror Mirror (G) Fri 12:20-2:50-5:15-7:50-10:15 Sat 2:50-5:15-7:50-10:15 Sun-Tue 12:20-2:50-5:15-7:50-10:15 Wed 12:20-2:50-5:15-10:15 Thu 12:20-2:50-5:15-7:50
The Pirates! Band of Misfits (G) Fri-Tue 12:15-2:30-4:45 Wed 12:15-2:30-4:45-7:35 Thu 12:15-2:30-4:45
The Pirates! Band of Misfits 3D (G) Fri-Tue 12:45-3:5:15-7:35-9:45 Wed 12:45-3-5-9:45 Thu 12:45-3-5:15-7:35-9:45
The Raven (18A) Fri-Thu 7:05-9:40
Safe (14A) Fri-Wed 12:55-3:15-5:35-8:05-10:20 Thu 12:55-3:15-10:20
Siegfried Wagner Opera (STC) Thu 6:30
A Streetcar Named Desire (STC) Wed 7
Titanic 3D (PG) Fri-Tue 1-5-9
Wrath of the Titans 3D (14A) Fri-Tue 12:30-2:50-5:20-7:45-10:10 Wed 12:05-2:25-4:55-10:25 Thu 12:55-3:15-5:45-8:10-10:35

Plaza Theatre
1133 Kensington Rd. N.W.,
403-283-3636

Miss Bala (14A) Fri 9:30 Sat 3-5-9 Sun-Wed 9
West Wind: The Vision of Tom Thomson (G) Fri 7 Sat-Sun 1-7 Mon-Wed 7 Thu 9:15

Sunridge Spectrum
2555 32nd Street,
403-717-1200

Chicken Run (G) Sat 11
Dark Shadows (14A) No Passes Fri-Sat 11:55-1:35-3-4:35-7-7:45-9:55-10:40 No Passes Sun 11:55-1:35-3-4:35-7-7:45-9:50-10:40 No Passes Mon-Thu 11:55-1:35-3-4:35-7-7:35-9:50-10:20
The Dictator (14A) No Passes Wed-Thu 12:15-2:35-4:55-7:25-9:45
The Five-Year Engagement (14A) Fri-Thu 12:45-4-7:15-10:15
The Hunger Games (14A) Fri-Sat 12:05-3:25-6:50-10:10 Sun 3:25-6:50-10:10 Mon-Thu 12:05-3:25-6:50-10:10
The Lucky One (PG) Fri-Tue 12:25-3:15-7:55-10:25
Marvel's the Avengers (PG) No Passes Fri 12-2:50-3:20-6:10-6:40-9:30-10 No Passes Sat 11:30-12-2:50-3:20-6:10-6:40-9:30-10 No Passes Sun-Tue 12-2:50-3:20-6:10-6:40-9:30-10 No Passes Wed 12-3:20-6:10-6:40-9:30-10 No Passes Thu 12-2:50-3:20-6:10-6:40-9:30-10 Star & Strollers Screening, No Passes Wed 1
Marvel's the Avengers 3D (PG) No Passes Fri-Sat 1-1:45-4:20-5-7:40-8:20-11 No Passes Sun-Thu 1-1:45-4:20-5-7:40-8:20 No Passes Fri-Thu 12:30-3:50-7:10-10:30
The Pirates! Band of Misfits (G) Fri-Tue 12:10 Star & Strollers Screening Wed 1 Thu 12:10
The Pirates! Band of Misfits 3D (G) Fri-Tue 2:40-5:05-7:30-10 Wed 5:05-7:30-10 Thu 2:40-5:05-7:30-10
Safe (14A) Fri-Sat 12:15-2:55-5:30-8:05-10:35 Sun 2:55-5:30-8:05-10:35 Mon-Thu 1:05-3:40-7:20-9:55
Taur Mittran Di (STC) Fri-Thu 1:30-5:10-8:30
Think Like a Man (PG) Fri-Thu 12:55-3:55-7:05-10:05
The Uptown Stage & Screen
612 8th Ave. S.W., 403-265-0120
Listings not available at press time.@ Cinema name Theatre 6:Westhills 10
165 Stewart Green, 403-246-5291
Dark Shadows (14A) No Passes Fri-Sat 11:40-2:15-4:50-7:30-10:20 Sun 11:40-2:15-4:50-7:30-10:20 Tue-Thu 6-8:50
The Dictator (14A) No Passes Wed-Thu 5:40-8:10
The Five-Year Engagement (14A) Fri-Sun 12:50-4-7:30-10:25 Mon-Thu 5:35-8:40
The Hunger Games (14A) Fri-Sun 12:20-3:30-6:40-9:50 Mon-Thu 5:10-8:20
The Lucky One (PG) Fri-Sun 12:40-3:10-7:10-9:40 Mon 8:45 Tue-Thu 6:10-8:45
Marvel's the Avengers (PG) Fri 11:30-2:50-6:10-9:30 No Passes Sat-Sun 11:30-2:50-6:10-9:30 No Passes Mon-Thu 5-8
Marvel's the Avengers 3D (PG) No Passes Fri-Sun 12-12:30-1-3:20-3:50-4:30-6:50-7:20-8-10-10:30 No Passes Mon-Thu 5:20-5:50-7:30-8:30-9
Metropolitan Opera: Manon Lescaut - Encore (STC) Mon 6:30
The Pirates! Band of Misfits (G) Fri-Sun 11:50 Mon-Thu 5:30
The Pirates! Band of Misfits 3D (G) Fri-Sun 2:20-4:40-7-9:20 Mon-Thu 7:50
Safe (14A) Fri-Sun 12:10-2:40-5-7:45-10:10 Mon 5:40 Tue 5:40-8:10

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Spektor's new album is full of surprises, even for her

Eclectic repertoire. Singer-songwriter says she forgets some of her old songs as she's busy making new ones

PAT HEALY
Metro News in Boston

Regina Spektor would really appreciate it if you could put your camera phone videos of her performances up online.

Not only do those videos help her remember how the new songs she is working out in concert go, but they also help her retrieve songs that she forgets how to play.

"In Florida I had to go online and go to YouTube and figure out the chords," she says of a song from her 2009 album, Far. "I've written so much stuff since then that I've pushed it out of my head."

And as far as the bootlegs of songs in progress go, she says if not for those phone videos, the songs Patron Saint and Open probably wouldn't have even made it onto her new album, What We Saw from the Cheap Seats.

"I got lucky that it was up there, actually," she says.

It's hard to believe that the singer would forget the latter song, because its repetition of dramatic inhalation during the chorus seems so instantly memorable. But Spektor does a lot of memorable things to make listeners forget that for most of her album and her live performance it's just her voice and her piano. In the new song, The Party she purses her lips together to fake a trumpet part.

"When I wrote it, in my mind it was just a placeholder for a real trumpet," she says. "First of all, it's really fun to do; it's a fun feeling, like even walking around the house being a trumpet. If you bring things from their implied state to a real state, sometimes it becomes better and sometimes, I don't know ... you try to feel what's right for the song."

Spektor says her producer, Mike Elizondo, teased her that when she beat boxes she sounds like a drum machine from the 1980s.

"I do a lot of things, like certain little beats and sounds, because I'm a person with a piano and that's it," she says.

Artist snapshot

Regina Spektor's life has taken some interesting turns.

- **Moscow by the Hudson.** She was born in Moscow (then the capital of the Soviet Union) in 1980, and grew up in the Bronx.
- **Colourful past.** She worked on a Wisconsin butterfly farm while attending college.
- **The show must go on.** Her cellist, Dan Cho, drowned the day before her emotional performance at the Montreux Jazz Festival in 2010.

Regina Spektor is more than happy to see her fans put their videos of her live performances online. GETTY

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having strong role models
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Spiritualized's Pierce uses pain as motivation

NOLAN GAWRON
Metro News

Spiritualized records have a history of being some of the most intricate, complex and laborious undertakings in modern rock. Conceived from the mind of Jason Pierce and translated to tape, Spiritualized's musical journey has included psychedelic freakouts and overwhelming orchestral offerings to gospel soul and epic etherealism. Exploring the sonic peaks and valleys of drug use complete with religious allusions, the band's anxious buildups and triumphant crescendos are like symphonies for substance sympathizers.

Jason Pierce isn't easy to track down, but at the last possible moment, Metro was able to talk to him about the recent release of his seventh album, Sweet Heart Sweet Light.

"I f—ing hate making records," says Pierce, wryly. "I really do. And it just gets harder. Sometimes I think I just make a record to tour because I feel the need to get back on the road. There's something exciting live when you're pushing it and you're within it, but you're not trying to hold onto it."

Pierce says when he started making Sweet Heart, he wanted it to sound like the Beatles.

"Then halfway through I realized I didn't really like the Beatles," he says. "Not that I don't like the Beatles' music, but I decided I wouldn't like to make a record like that."

He says he was looking to produce sounds that defied genre classification.

"I wanted to make something where you didn't have to be hip to a certain style or music, you could just sit and listen to it like a collection of songs that really worked," he says. "When I tried to put that down, it became very hard to make. Anyone trying to make pop music has nowhere to hide. You can't hide in an abstract idea. It doesn't really come with a disclaimer."

While his previous record followed his near-death experience with double pneumonia, Sweet Heart Sweet Light was written during another health scare, one he doesn't like to talk about.

Spiritualized's Jason Pierce

Bernie Finkelstein

Reflections on a life in indie music

BERNARD WEIL/THE TORONTO STAR

SOUND CHECK
Alan Cross
scene@metronews.ca

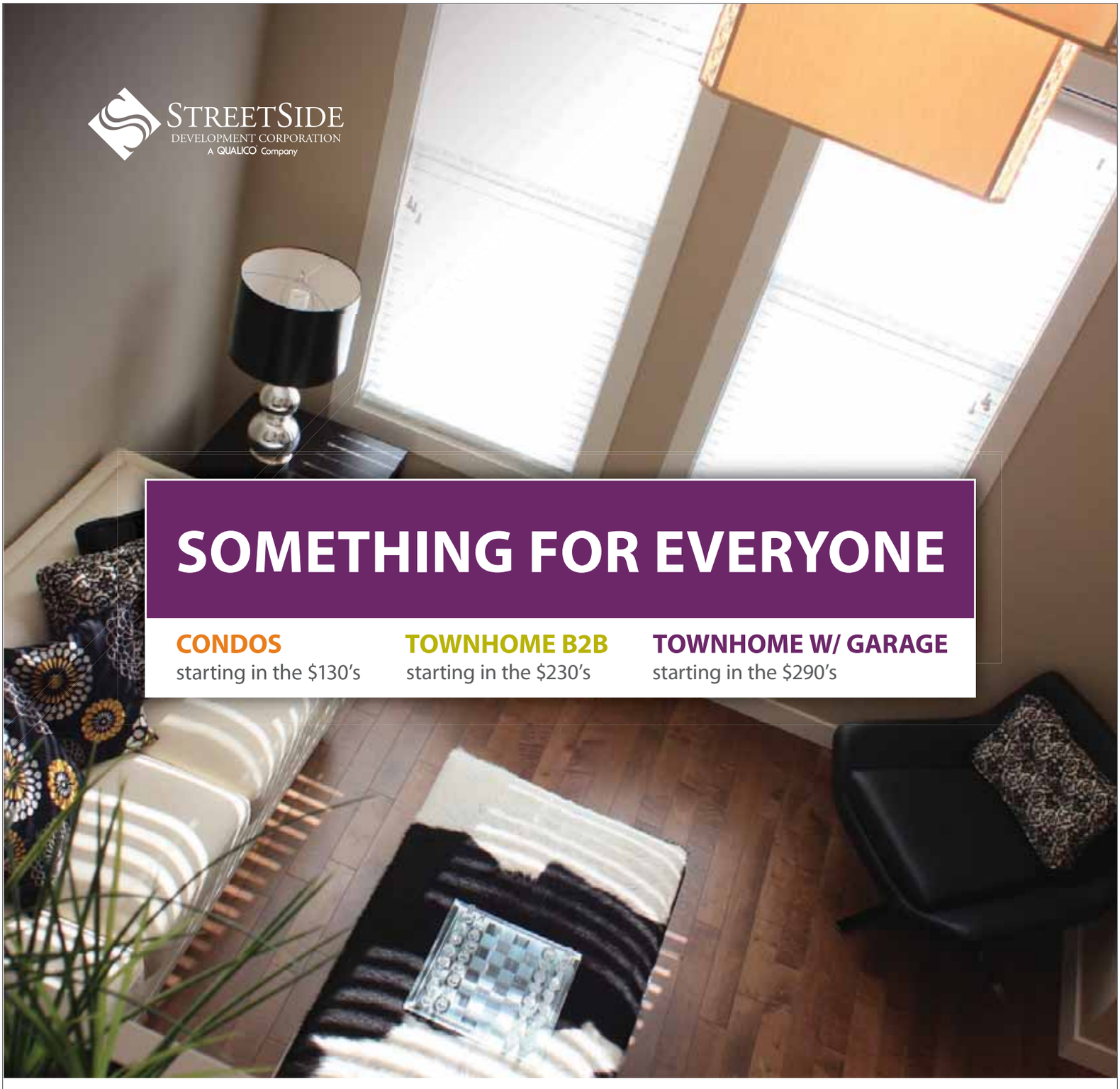
Bernie Finkelstein sounds relaxed over the phone from his getaway in Prince Edward County. Fruits of having sold his True North Records in late 2007? "A little bit," he says, "although it's more about more free time. I've gone from 21 acts to managing just one, plus I closed the office in Toronto."

Bernie is being asked to talk a lot about himself these days with the publication of his autobiography, True North: A Life in the Music Business, which starts with his time as an air force brat through all his years running one of the most important and most successful independent music labels in this country. True North also had interests in artist management, music publishing and concert promotion.

"I thought I'd better write down these memories so that maybe one day in the future when someone is researching the history of Canadian music, they can find my book on a dusty library shelf somewhere — if those things still exist — and use it to tell the story."

Bernie is concerned about Canadians' short memory when it comes to musical heritage. "Feist was not the first person to have a No. 1 hit on a Canadian independent label. Have we forgotten about what Sarah McLachlan did on Nettwerk? But it's understandable, given that we're overwhelmed with American music history."

True North was founded in 1969, two years before Canadian content regulations went into effect. "You have to understand that back then there was no Canadian music industry.



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Friday

Jason Sudeikis GETTY IMAGES

Jason Sudeikis digs into his roots

This is no joke — comic Jason Sudeikis is featured on Friday's edition of Who Do You Think You Are? The Saturday Night Live star heads to Chicago to learn more about the life and death of his paternal grandfather. Along the way, he makes a discovery about his great-great-grandfather in Pennsylvania. (Citytv, NBC)
THE CANADIAN PRESS

Selleck lays down the law

Tom Selleck's still got it. Actor plays two kinds of lawmen, starring in Blue Bloods plus a new Jesse Stone TV film

As Blue Bloods reaches its second-season finale, Tom Selleck is looking ahead to season three.

On the CBS hit drama, Selleck plays Frank Reagan, the NYPD commissioner and patriarch of a family devoted to law enforcement and one another. His offspring include a detective (Donnie Wahlberg), a cop (Will Estes) and an assistant D.A. (Bridget Moynahan). On duty and off, they, along with the extended Reagan family, have each other's back — even if it's not always easy to say it.

"We Reagans aren't real gushy, but I couldn't be more proud of you," Frank Reagan tells his daughter in one of his more expansive displays.

Frank is an upright, reassuring presence for his brood and for Blue Bloods viewers alike, especially presiding at the head of the table for the family dinners that have become a weekly staple of the show.

The role is a comfortable fit for Selleck, himself a family man wed to Jillie for a quarter-century and with a grown daughter, Hannah.

And yet the role poses challenges: How do you play a character who is strong and incorruptible without appearing too good to be true?

"A commander can't expose his weakness or doubt or concern or worry," says Selleck. "I have to show all those things to the audience without showing it to the cops I'm ordering around. When you get inside Frank's head, you realize that anybody with the weight of the world on his shoulders will exhibit flaws that come from dealing with that kind of pressure. I think next season we're going to get inside of him more and reveal more of them."

At the same time, Selleck hopes the show will find some lighter moments. "I can't sit around giving orders all day," he says. "They cast me because I can play bosses. But I have other colours I can play."

No doubt. As the Vietnam-vet-turned-private-eye Thomas Magnum, Selleck knew how to play serious with a well-timed wink. And don't forget his guest role on Friends, as well as such comedy features as In & Out and Three Men and a Baby, the top-grossing film of 1987.

Still strikingly handsome at 67, the strapping, dimple-cheeked Selleck has had to work against those leading-man looks ever since his uncertain start as an actor.

"When I was 25 I sounded 15 and looked 35," he says with a laugh. "That clearly wasn't working. It was only when I kind of grew into myself that the quirky aspects of what I do became a strength."

In a pivotal step that led to his eight seasons on Magnum P.I., Selleck scored a lighthearted guest shot on The Rockford Files. As the charming and charmed investigator Lance White, he struck the perfect comic contrast to the lovably bedeviled gumshoe Jim Rockford. Selleck considers Rockford star James Garner a mentor in showing him how to mine humour from drama.

"I think humour is an essential element of a long career," says Selleck, "and I miss actual comedy. If you want to tell everybody I'm available for the three months Blue Bloods isn't on, I'd LOVE to do a comedy!"

Of course, Selleck was busy during last year's hiatus. He was filming Jesse Stone: Benefit of the Doubt. Airing on CBS on May 20, it's the eighth in the series of Jesse Stone whodunits that began in 2005, based on characters created by the late Robert B. Parker in his best-selling series of books.

Selleck manages to wring sparks of humour from this melancholy lawman, who, as the film begins, has lost his end-of-the-line job as police chief of tiny Paradise, Mass.

The surface whodunit surrounds a mob-related double homicide, "but the mystery at the beginning of the tale is always Jesse. "He's a totally decent guy who has a lot of issues, and deals with them every day," says Selleck. But Jesse is a man of few words — words that often leaven with irony the pain he feels.

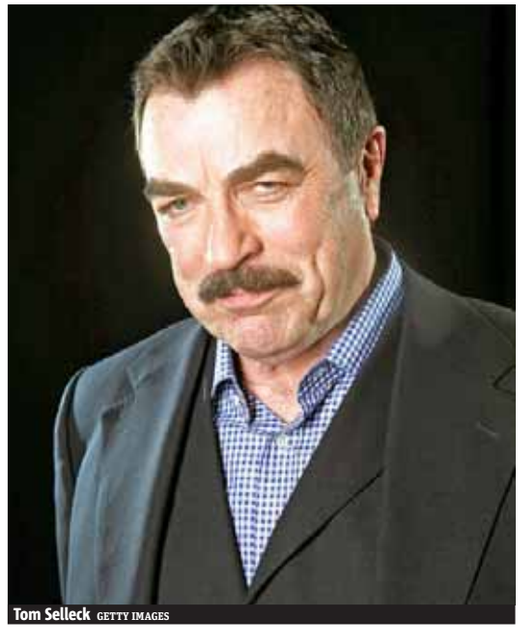
Selleck makes it work. Not for him is overacting as Jesse, who pines for his ex-wife and struggles for grounding in this backwater town.

"It's like crying on-screen," says Selleck, citing his cardinal no-no. "Actors are always proud when they cry. But what people do in real life when they're getting emotional is, they try NOT to cry. They're embarrassed about it."

As for Jesse, "he's had a real journey," Selleck says. "Right now, in (film) number eight, he's trying to get his job back and put his universe back in order." THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Quoted

"I can't sit around giving orders all day. They cast me because I can play bosses. But I have other colours I can play."
Tom Selleck, on playing Frank in Blue Bloods



Tom Selleck GETTY IMAGES

We had to ask...

Is facial hair standard issue for Selleck?

- **He's not that attached to his 'mo, actually.** "It becomes part of your look and it becomes baggage," he says, "but I never had any qualms about shaving it off" (and did, for example, to play Gen. Dwight D. Eisenhower in the 2004 TV film Ike: Countdown to D-Day).

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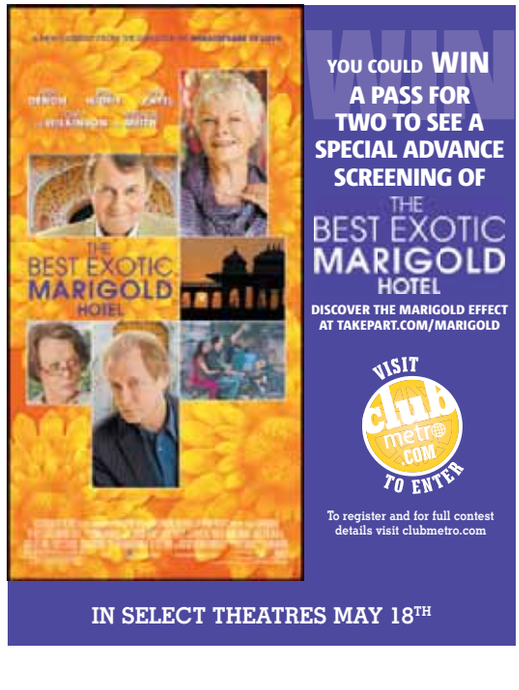
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IN SELECT THEATRES MAY 18TH

METRO DISH

OUR TAKE ON THE WORLD OF CELEBRITIES

The Word

Kim Kardashian

Kanye West ALL PHOTOS GETTY IMAGES

We can't let them finish

THE WORD
Monica Weymouth
scene@metronews.ca

When Kanye West and Kim Kardashian first stepped out together in March, we weren't too alarmed. Surely, these two would eventually find each other and combine their powers for some sunbathing-on-the-yacht photo ops.

But now, it seems we could be dealing with something worse than staged summer love: the real deal.

"Kim and Kanye are 100 per cent having conversations about marriage," a source tells UsMagazine.com, adding that West had been interested "for a long time."

Another source — let's call this one Worst Source Ever — says Kim's on board: "They've been friends for years. Kim is ready to give it a try now."

Now, before we go all 2012 here, we really should mention that all of this was started by a quick couple lines West rapped in a new Pusha T song: "I saw you in the club in a white dress/ Now I want to put you in a white dress."

For all we know, he could just be talking about drugs here. Maybe sex. Possibly both. People who still go outside after 9 p.m. — tell us it will all be OK!

Joe Jonas: Fax me

Joe Jonas seems like a nice young man. Nice enough that we even kind of buy that he's doing Pepsi's Live for Now campaign for something other than the money.

"It's a cool way to be able to go to this platform and be able to check out different pop culture things that are going on," he told us this week while on a promotion tour in New York.

But, moving on, let's talk underwear and flirty faxes.

On his forward fans
"The boldest is probably throwing articles of underwear on stage. That has happened. And then I've had a fan once ask me to punch them, which I thought was crazy, and they were like, well because then, you know, I'll always remember it. I'm like, you know what, I really don't wanna do that. That was a female fan. I didn't hit her."

On getting a girl's attention
"I faxed somebody once. I was asking somebody on a date. I met her at a store and I sent her a fax that said, hey would you like to go out with me, here's my number. She faxed me back."

ADDITIONAL REPORTING BY MEREDITH ENGEL

Anna Faris is preggers and already wants more?

Anna Faris and Chris Pratt are expecting their first child, according to People magazine.

The couple, who met on the set of Take Me Home Tonight and tied the knot in 2009, have been thinking about kids for a while — and this baby could be just the beginning, to hear Faris tell it.

"Chris wants a big family," Faris told E! News last year. "I would love to have eight. I don't think I could handle it, though."

Anna Faris and Chris Pratt

Is One Direction going in all different directions?

After their lightning-fast rise to fame, the boys of One Direction are already facing breakup rumors, with member Harry Styles' latest travel itinerary suggesting he's on the lookout for a solo career, according to the Daily Star.

"[Harry's] been offered a big solo project, so he flew out to Los Angeles without the rest of the boy band," a source says.

"He's been in America filming something. It may have been an advert or a film — I can't say exactly what — but it's worth a lot of money."

But a rep for the boy band is quick to quash the rumors, saying the trip wasn't for business at all.

"This report is false. Harry was on vacation in L.A.," their rep tells Hollyscoop.

Twitter

@CraigyFerg
Sorry I haven't tweeted for a while - there was a new Angry Birds app.

@kirstiealley
coming out of my cocoon today....hope new wings take me where I want to go...they always have..;)

@ActuallyNPH
Yet another My Life Is Random moments: Oprah came over to our house today. I made her pizza.

@SarahKSilverman
I'm finding it hard to get sympathy with my I-pulled-a-muscle-on-a-zip-line story.

Brit to judge X Factor: Source

The deal is done: Britney Spears is reportedly joining the X Factor as a judge, joining executive producer Simon Cowell and L.A. Reid on the panel, according to E! News.

"There's been a lot of back and forth over the past few weeks as they negotiated the small details, but she's on," a source says. "It's all completed and Britney is beyond excited."

Spears will reportedly earn $15 million for her work on the show's second season, though it isn't clear if the deal extends beyond that. The deal now leaves one judge's chair empty on the singing competition's panel, with Miley Cyrus a rumoured front-runner for the spot. But Hollywood Life reports that the former Hannah Montana star is being considered instead to replace host Steve Jones.

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3 LIFE

Trends

Packaged Cold Cuts

Food companies looking to capitalize on consumers' increasingly sophisticated tastes are carving out new directions in lunch meat with upscale options that are pre-sliced, prepackaged and ready to go right alongside the bologna. Some prepackaged lunch meats now come in thicker slices, mirroring the choice at a traditional deli. Herbs and spices also are showing up in prepackaged products, boosting flavour and appeal. Meanwhile, producers have been cutting salt and removing artificial ingredients in response to customers' requests for a more natural product.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

On the web

Julia Child taught Americans to love food, and women to take pride in making it

Liquid Assets

An easy-like-Sunday-morning sipper

LIQUID ASSETS
Peter Rockwell
@therealwineguy
peterrockwell@eastlink.cca

A reader sent me an e-mail last week asking if I could recommend a wine to go with breakfast in bed.

While he was looking to impress his wife on their upcoming anniversary, with Mother's Day this weekend I'm betting many of you guys out there will also be looking to score some bonus points Sunday morning.

Eclectic is the best way to describe a breakfast menu. The fun part is that any early morning tipple should be light, fresh and very easy-drinking — the same flavour profile that loves unusual eats.

Though the selection varies across the country, a white wine made with the moscato grape is a perfect early morning sipper.

Slightly sweet and low in alcohol, they're an a.m. friendly wine style gaining a solid following during the day as well.

I think sparkling when it comes to breakfast (or brunch) is best. Forget the orange juice and pick one with the union of fruit and wine already built in.

Chile's Fresita ($12.95 - $15.99) is infused with the essence of real strawberries. The result is a berry bomb that explodes in the mouth and will add plenty of refreshment to your Mother's Day.

PRICES REFLECT THE RANGE ACROSS THE COUNTRY. SOME PRODUCTS MAY NOT BE AVAILABLE IN ALL PROVINCES.

Classic treat will make mom smile on her day

Emily's Mom's Quick Cinnamon Buns.
Metro's food columnist shares a special treat from her childhood

DINNER EXPRESS
Emily Richards
food@metronews.ca

With Mother's Day this Sunday, I've been thinking about my mom. My thoughts led me to a treat my mother used to make on the weekends or even during the week after dinner.

In an old notebook dating back to my high school days, I found the recipe for Mom's Cinnamon Buns.

These biscuit style cinnamon buns are perfect to enjoy with a cup of tea or coffee with mom or any special person on any day you want to sit back and chat about a memory or two. They're best served warmed out of the oven or reheated in the microwave before serving.

This recipe makes nine buns. EMILY RICHARDS

Ingredients

- ½ cup (125 mL) butter
- ½ cup (125 mL) packed brown sugar

Dough

- 2 cups (500 mL) all purpose flour
- 4 tsp (20 mL) baking powder
- ¼ tsp (1 mL) salt
- ½ cup (125 mL) lard or shortening
- 2/3 cup (150 mL) milk

Filling

- ½ cup (125 mL) butter, very soft but not melted
- ½ cup (125 mL) packed brown sugar
- 2 tsp (10 mL) ground cinnamon

1. In saucepan, melt butter and sugar, whisking over medium heat until smooth and combined. Pour into lightly sprayed 8 inch (2 L) baking dish; spread evenly across bottom; set aside.

2. Dough: In bowl, stir flour, baking powder and salt. Cut lard into flour using fingers until mix is crumbly looking. Drizzle in milk and stir using fork to combine. Bring dough together and knead gently on lightly floured surface to make smooth dough. Roll out dough on floured surface to make a 14-inch (35 cm) square.

3. Filling: In bowl, stir butter, sugar and cinnamon until very smooth. Spread evenly all over dough right to the edges. Roll up dough, jelly-roll style and pinch seam along edge. Cut log into 9 equal pieces and place into prepared baking dish.

4. Bake in centre of a 400 F (200 C) oven 25 mins or until golden brown and sauce is bubbly. Let stand for three minutes before turning out onto platter.

EMILY RICHARDS IS A PROFESSIONAL HOME ECONOMIST, COOKBOOK AUTHOR AND TV CELEBRITY CHEF. FOR MORE, VISIT EMILYRICHARDSCOOKS.CA

Have a few gaps in your schedule you're looking to fill?
Whether you're hoping to dance, drink or just relax, check out these hot upcoming events courtesy of Notable.ca
To get even more info on these Notable happenings make sure to check out Notable.ca/calgary/may11

NOTABLE NOW
Julian Brass, Founder of notable.ca, Canada's online source for young professionals

Just Opened: Clive Burger

For those in search of a perfect burger, Clive Burger (736 17th Ave. S.W.) may be just the place. They offer a simple menu of burgers with a variety of toppings to choose from. The interior is welcoming with plenty of seating for diners to enjoy their food. And you can be rest assured as you eat, knowing that all the food and packaging waste is 100 per cent compostable.

Just Opened: The Fine Diner

For the city's foodies, The Fine Diner recently opened its doors in historic Inglewood (1420 9th Ave. S.E.). Kicking diner food up a notch, they offer unique diner menu items using local, high-quality ingredients. Whether breakfast, lunch or dinner, The Fine Diner is worth a fine visit.

cultureHOUSE PARTY

Theatre Junction Grand's annual fundraiser benefiting contemporary performing arts in Calgary is back. On May 10 cultureHOUSE PARTY will bring YPs to lounge in the backyard, dance with the band in the living room, flirt in the garden and chill in artists studio. You name it, there is something notable happening at this unique and artistic fundraiser. 608 1st St. S.W. Calgary.

Calgary 2012 Sweet City Celebration

Ready for some sweetness? On May 11, kicking-off a full year of cultural activity, the Sweet City Celebration will feature guests including The Stampeders, who will perform the Cultural Capital theme song, Sweet City Woman. Superheroes, food trucks, performance artists, living statues, DJs, cowboys and … wait for it … dragons, will also be featured.

BMO Centre-Stampede Park (1410 Olympic Way S.E.).

Boléro

Presented by the Calgary Philharmonic Orchestra, Boléro brings the flavours of Spain, which are infused in some of the most colourful works ever written, including the sultry Boléro. Rachel Barton Pine brings her fiery style to the stage with two stunning performances on the violin.

May 12 at Jack Singer Concert Hall (201 8th Ave. S.E.).

Converge Monthly Networking Mixer

Converge, the newest Calgary cultural initiative launching for Calgary Stampede will be hosting a monthly networking mixer leading up to Stampede. Join Calgary business leaders, creative, and notable young professionals at UBU Lounge after work for cocktails and conversations.

UBU Lounge (608 1st St. S.W.).

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4 SPORTS

Tennis

Nadal blue after 3rd-round loss

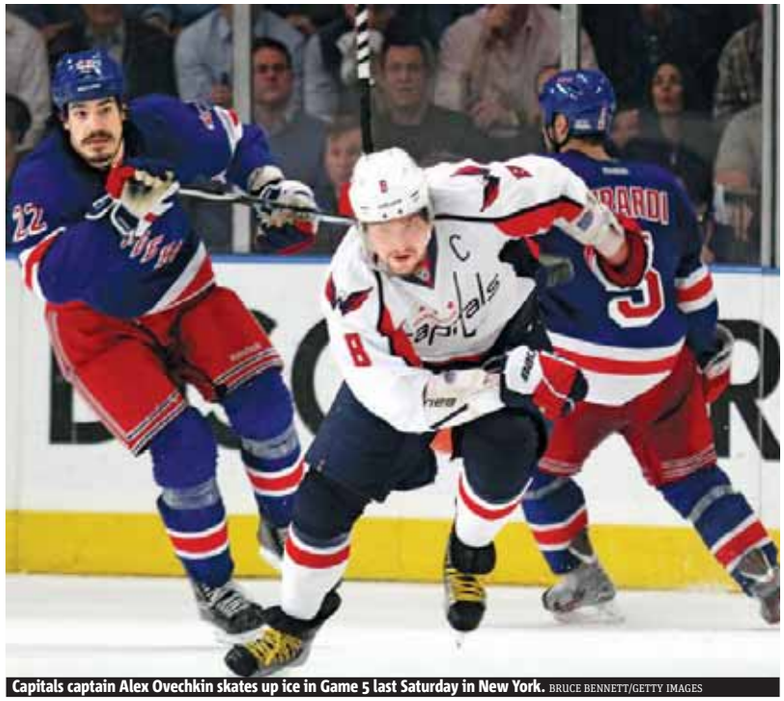
Rafael Nadal lost to Spanish countryman Fernando Verdasco for the first time in the Madrid Open on Thursday, then threatened, along with top-ranked Novak Djokovic, not to return if the new blue clay court wasn't discarded. Nadal blew a 5-2 lead in the third set in losing 6-3, 3-6, 7-5, his first defeat to Verdasco in 14 matches. The third-round loss was Nadal's earliest exit on clay since 2004. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

On the web

There was a point in Hayley Wickenheiser's life when she was consumed by hockey. But ever since Canada's all-time scoring leader adopted Noah, the son of her boyfriend 12 years ago, she says she became cured of "the disease of me." Scan the code for the story.

All bets are off back in the Big Apple

NHL. No clear-cut favourite in Capitals-Rangers Game 7 at Madison Square Garden



Capitals captain Alex Ovechkin skates up ice in Game 5 last Saturday in New York. BRUCE BENNETT/GETTY IMAGES

Crunch the numbers, ride the waves of momentum, and then try to guess if the Washington Capitals or New York Rangers will survive another Game 7 and move on to the Eastern Conference finals.

Hockey analysts will make very compelling arguments — and leave anyone who is listening believing that both teams can't lose the win-or-go-home matchup on Saturday night at Madison Square Garden.

Ah yes, Madison Square Garden, the famed arena in which the host Rangers are 4-0 in Game 7s. It is also the place where the Rangers pulled out a Game 5 win in this series by scoring a power-play goal with 7.6 seconds left in regulation, and then another less than two minutes into overtime, turning what appeared to be a sure loss into one of the most electrifying victories in club history.

You know, the tide-turning win that the Capitals would never be able to bounce back from — even though they were heading home for Game 6. It didn't quite work out that way, and now it's the Rangers who will fight to make sure there is no carry-over in the other direction for Game 7.

"We can't let it," Rangers captain Ryan Callahan said. "We have to put this one behind us. We have to go in Saturday ready to play."

Whoever prevails will face the well-rested New Jersey Devils with a trip to the Stanley Cup finals on the line. The Rangers, eliminated from the playoffs by Washington in two of the previous three seasons, haven't been to the conference finals since 1997. That was three years after they won the cup for the first time in 54 years.

The Capitals have never won it all. They were swept in 1998 by Detroit in their only appearance in the cup finals and have been to the conference finals twice.

"It takes a lot of character to bounce back all the time," Capitals coach Dale Hunter said. "You're going to have your ups and downs, especially in the playoffs. We have a lot of character in that room."

Alex Ovechkin has been a symbol of that. He has dealt with limited ice time in the playoffs, but hasn't sulked. He had no shots in Game 5, and it appeared that perhaps he had been neutralized by New York.

Not so fast.

Just 1:28 into the Capitals' last stand at home Wednesday night, Ovechkin zipped a shot over goalie Henrik Lundqvist's suddenly susceptible glove to give Washington a power-play goal and a lead it would never give up in a 2-1 win that saved the season at least for two more days.

"Ovi has been good," Hunter said. "You see him blocking shots. He's dedicated to winning like the rest of he guys are. And doing the little things."

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Quoted

"We have to get together here and just play our absolute best hockey of the year."

Henrik Lundqvist, Rangers goaltender

NLL

Roughnecks' Poulin earns top goalie award

Mike Poulin of the Calgary Roughnecks has been named the National Lacrosse League's goaltender of the year.

Poulin ranked second with a 10.27 goals-against average and was tied for second with 10 wins.

The Roughnecks, meanwhile, allowed a league-low 170 goals while finishing first overall at 12-4.

"Mike is a young, athletic goalie and an integral part of our team," Calgary general manager Mike Board said in a statement. "He is a leader on and off the floor and a mentor to his teammates."

Calgary's season ended Saturday after an upset loss to Edmonton in the West semifinal.

Aaron Bold of the Rush finished second in voting while Chris Levis of the Colorado Mammoth was third. THE CANADIAN PRESS

MLB

Alvarez stays in fine form for Jays

Henderson Alvarez pitched seven strong innings to win his third straight start for the Toronto Blue Jays, 6-2 over the Minnesota Twins on Thursday night.

Alvarez (3-2) stretched his scoreless streak to 17 innings before second baseman Kelly Johnson's throwing error allowed the Twins to score in the third. Josh Willingham hit a home run in the sixth, but the 22-year-old Venezuelan didn't give up any more than that. He allowed seven hits and three walks while striking out two, and one of those runs was unearned.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

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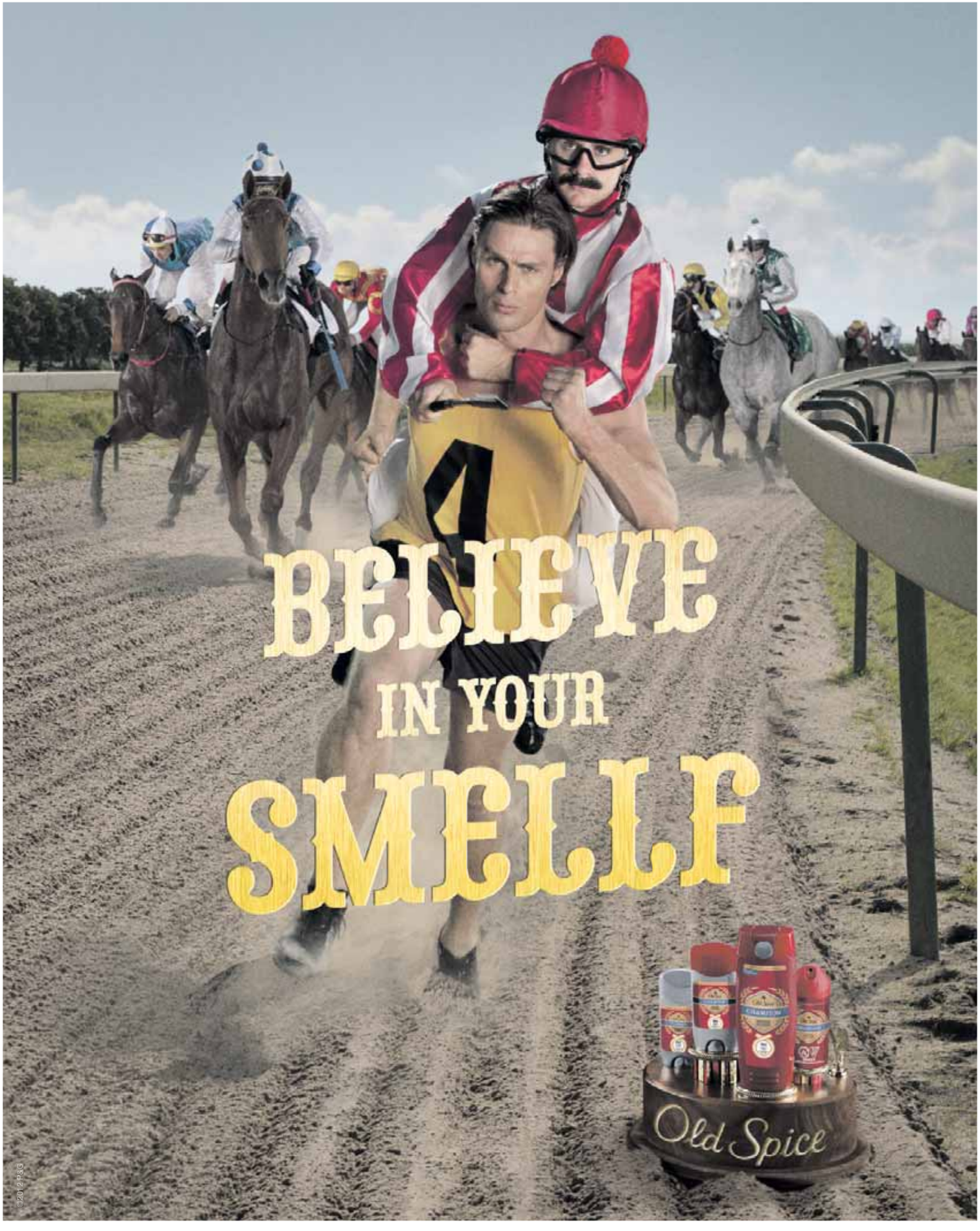
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NBA

Harden named best off the bench

Oklahoma City's James Harden was named the sixth man of the year Thursday.

Harden averaged a league-best 16.8 points off the bench on a career-best 49 per cent shooting this season. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

NBA

'Birdman' banned after police search

Denver Nuggets centre Chris (Birdman) Andersen has been excused indefinitely from all team-related activities after Douglas County sheriff's deputies searched his home Thursday as part of an investigation of the Internet Crimes Against Children unit. Andersen has not been arrested and police said no arrest warrant was issued. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Chris Andersen GETTY IMAGES

MLB

Yankees' Pettitte ready to 'get going'

Andy Pettitte pronounced himself ready to rejoin New York's rotation on Thursday.

"It's time now," he said Thursday. "It's time to get up here and get going."

Pettitte will start Sunday against Seattle. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

NHL

"This team, we've just started going where we want to go."

Anaheim head coach Bruce Boudreau, who was signed to a two-year contract extension by the Ducks on Thursday.

NHL

Gainey heading back to Texas

Bob Gainey is returning to the Dallas Stars as a senior advisor, the team announced Thursday.

Gainey was the general manager of the Stars when they won their only Stanley Cup in 1999. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

76ers deliver coup de grace to wounded Bulls

NBA. Philadelphia topples No. 1 seed Chicago for first series victory since 2003

76ers forward Elton Brand shoots over Chicago's Carlos Boozer in Philadelphia on Thursday night. DREW HALLOWELL/GETTY IMAGES

Andre Iguodala and Evan Turner hopped on the scorer's table and played to the crowd as the catchy 76ers theme song blared in the arena.

Eight years of going home empty was over. The Sixers were ready for a long-overdue post-season celebration.

Iguodala made the go-ahead free throws with 2.2 seconds left and Philadelphia rallied for a 79-78 victory over the top-seeded Chicago Bulls in Game 6 on Thursday night to advance to the second round.

The 76ers will face Boston, which beat Atlanta in six games, in the conference semi-finals.

Omar Asik missed two free throws for the Bulls with seven seconds left that would have sealed the win. Iguodala grabbed the second miss, sprinted the length of the court, and was fouled by Asik on the driving layup. He made both and 20,362 fans went absolutely wild.

The Sixers are the fifth No. 8 seed to win a first-round series against a No. 1 seed. Memphis eliminated San Antonio last season, while Golden State (2007), New York (1999) and Denver (1994) also pulled off the rare feat.

In his second season, coach Doug Collins had already led the Sixers to their first winning season in seven years. Now, it's on to the second round for the first time since Allen Iverson was an all-star.

"I don't know how we won this game," Collins said.

The Sixers were smiling and mobbed each other as they dashed to the locker-room to keep the party going.

Game 6

76ers	Bulls
79	78

Iguodala scored 20 points, and Jrue Holiday and Lou Williams each scored 14. The Sixers won even though the Bulls crushed them 56-33 on the boards.

Iguodala snagged the one that mattered.

"We win on a rebound. Something we don't get all night," a smiling Collins said.

Iguodala made nine of 10 free throws in the fourth quarter in this series after shooting 45 per cent (23 of 51) from the line in the fourth this season.

Luol Deng had 19 points and 17 rebounds for the Bulls. Richard Hamilton scored 19 points and Carlos Boozer grabbed 13 rebounds. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

MLB. Yankees' Cashman: Clemens asked for McNamee to be hired

Injured and defeated in a playoff game against the Boston Red Sox, Roger Clemens asked for the man who could "push his buttons." He asked for Brian McNamee.

Brian Cashman, the general manager of the New York Yankees, recalled that moment Thursday in the perjury trial of the 11-time all-star pitcher. It was Game 3 of the ALCS in 1999. Clemens had allowed five runs before leaving after two innings with a bum leg. He had struggled through what would be the worst season of his 24-year career, when it came to his earned run average.

Cashman said he went to the visitor's clubhouse at Fenway Park and found Clemens with ice on his leg and frustration on his face.

"He talked about how he clicked with Brian McNamee," Cashman said. "He knew his body. Brian knew how to train him, push the right buttons on him."

McNamee was hired by the Yankees as an assistant strength and conditioning coach the following year at a salary of $30,000 US, but as Cashman put it: "His duties were to train Roger Clemens."

McNamee, who is expected to testify next week, has said he injected Clemens with steroids and human growth hormone during the 1998, 2000, and 2001 major-league seasons. Clemens is on trial for perjury, based on his testimony to Congress in 2008 that he never used either substance.

As the trial reached the end of its fourth week, it finally began to gravitate toward its key witness. McNamee is expected to testify next week, perhaps as early as Monday. The government's case hinges on his credibility. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Roger Clemens leaves court in Washington D.C. last week. GETTY IMAGES FILE

Toronto connection

- Before joining the Yankees, McNamee had previously worked with Clemens when both were with the Toronto Blue Jays, where Clemens won two Cy Young Awards in two seasons.

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MLB

AMERICAN LEAGUE

EAST DIVISION

	W	L	Pct	GB
Baltimore	20	12	.625	—
Tampa Bay	20	12	.625	—
Toronto	18	14	.563	2
New York	17	14	.548	2½
Boston	12	19	.387	7½

CENTRAL DIVISION

	W	L	Pct	GB
Cleveland	18	13	.581	—
Detroit	15	15	.500	2½
Chicago	15	17	.469	3½
Kansas City	11	19	.367	6½
Minnesota	8	23	.258	10

WEST DIVISION

	W	L	Pct	GB
Texas	21	11	.656	—
Oakland	16	15	.516	4½
Seattle	15	18	.455	6½
Los Angeles	14	18	.438	7

Yesterday's results
Toronto 6 Minnesota 2
Baltimore 6-3 Texas 5-7
Cleveland 8 Boston 3
N.Y. Yankees 5 Tampa Bay 3
Detroit at Oakland
Wednesday's results
Toronto 5 Oakland 2
Chicago White Sox 8 Cleveland 1
Kansas City 4 Boston 3
L.A. Angels 6 Minnesota 2
Seattle 2 Detroit 1
Tampa Bay 4 N.Y. Yankees 1
Texas at Baltimore (ppd., rain)
Tonight's games — All Times Eastern
Seattle (F.Hernandez 3-1) at N.Y. Yankees (Kuroda 2-4), 7:05 p.m.
Tampa Bay (Hellickson 3-0) at Baltimore (Eveland 0-0), 7:05 p.m.
Cleveland (Jimenez 3-2) at Boston (Buchholz 3-1), 7:10 p.m.
L.A. Angels (C.Wilson 4-2) at Texas (Darvish 4-1), 8:05 p.m.
Kansas City (F.Paulino 1-0) at Chicago White Sox (Floyd 2-3), 8:10 p.m.
Toronto (Drabek 2-3) at Minnesota (Blackburn 0-4), 8:10 p.m.
Detroit (Porcello 3-2) at Oakland (Milone 4-2), 10:05 p.m.

NATIONAL LEAGUE

EAST DIVISION

	W	L	Pct	GB
Washington	19	12	.613	—
Atlanta	19	13	.594	½
New York	18	13	.581	1
Miami	16	15	.516	3
Philadelphia	14	18	.438	5½

CENTRAL DIVISION

	W	L	Pct	GB
St. Louis	20	11	.645	—
Cincinnati	16	14	.533	3½
Houston	14	17	.452	6
Pittsburgh	14	17	.452	6
Chicago	13	18	.419	7
Milwaukee	13	18	.419	7

WEST DIVISION

	W	L	Pct	GB
Los Angeles	20	11	.645	—
San Francisco	15	16	.484	5
Arizona	14	18	.438	6½
Colorado	13	17	.433	6½
San Diego	11	21	.344	9½

Last night's result
Washington 4 Pittsburgh 2
Wednesday's results
Chicago Cubs 1 Atlanta 0
Cincinnati 2 Milwaukee 1
Colorado 6 San Diego 2
L.A. Dodgers 6 San Francisco 2
Miami 5 Houston 3 (12 innings)
N.Y. Mets 10 Philadelphia 6
Pittsburgh 4 Washington 2
St. Louis 7 Arizona 2
Tonight's games — All Times Eastern
Houston (Norris 2-1) at Pittsburgh (Ja.McDonald 2-1), 7:05 p.m.
San Diego (Richard 1-4) at Philadelphia (Worley 2-2), 7:05 p.m.
N.Y. Mets (J.Santana 1-2) at Miami (Buehrle 2-4), 7:10 p.m.
Washington (G.Gonzalez 3-1) at Cincinnati (Leake 0-4), 7:10 p.m.
Chicago Cubs (Garza 2-1) at Milwaukee (Wolf 2-3), 8:10 p.m.
Atlanta (Minor 2-2) at St. Louis (J.Garcia 2-2), 8:15 p.m.
San Francisco (Bumgarner 5-1) at Arizona (Corbin 1-1), 9:40 p.m.
Colorado (Moyer 1-2) at L.A. Dodgers (Capuano 4-0), 10:10 p.m.

BLUE JAYS 6, TWINS 2

Toronto	ab	r	h	bi	Minnesota	ab	r	h	bi
KJhnsn 2b	5	1	1	0	Span cf	3	0	1	0
YEscor ss	4	3	4	0	Dozier ss	4	0	1	0
Bautist rf	3	0	0	0	Mauer 1b	3	0	0	0
Encrnc dh	4	1	1	2	Wlngh dh	3	1	1	1
Thams lf	4	0	0	1	Doumit c	4	0	0	0
Lawrie 3b	4	1	2	2	Plouffe 3b	4	0	1	0
Rasms cf	3	0	2	1	Komats rf	3	0	2	0
Lind 1b	4	0	0	0	Mstrnn lf	3	0	0	0
Arencii c	4	0	0	0	ACasill 2b	3	1	1	0
Totals	**35**	**6**	**10**	**6**	**Totals**	**30**	**2**	**7**	**1**

Toronto	**203**	**100**	**000 — 6**
Minnesota	**001**	**001**	**000 — 2**

E—K.Johnson (6), H.Alvarez (1). DP—Toronto 3. LOB—Toronto 8, Minnesota 4. 2B—Rasmus (4). HR—Willingham (7). SB—Encarnacion (5). CS—Y.Escobar (1). SF—Thames.

Toronto	IP	H	R	ER	BB	SO
H.Alvarez W,3-2	7	7	2	1	3	2
L.Perez	1	0	0	0	0	2
Frasor	1	0	0	0	0	2
Minnesota						
Marquis L,2-2	4	7	6	5	3	2
Swarzak	3	2	0	0	0	3
Perkins	1	0	0	0	1	3
Grey	1	1	0	0	0	1

HBP—by Marquis (Bautista). WP—Marquis, Gray. PB—Doumit.
T—2:45. A—31,438 (39,500) at Minneapolis

GOLF

PGA PLAYERS CHAMPIONSHIP

At Ponte Vedra Beach, Fla.
Par 72
First Round

Ian Poulter	34-31—65
Martin Laird	33-32—65
Blake Adams	31-35—66
Kevin Na	37-30—67
Ben Crane	33-34—67
Michael Thompson	35-33—68
Harrison Frazar	33-35—68
Matt Kuchar	34-34—68
Kevin Stadler	35-33—68
Jhonattan Vegas	34-34—68
Jonathan Byrd	33-35—68
Adam Scott	33-35—68
Bill Haas	35-33—68
Ben Curtis	33-35—68
Brian Davis	34-34—68
Sang-Moon Bae	34-34—68
Pat Perez	36-33—69
Kris Blanks	34-35—69
Arjun Atwal	34-35—69
Padraig Harrington	35-34—69
David Hearn	**35-34—69**
Also	
Graham DeLaet	**36-35—71**

NHL PLAYOFFS

STANLEY CUP

CONFERENCE SEMI-FINALS

(Best-of-7)
All Times Eastern

EASTERN CONFERENCE
N.Y. RANGERS (1) VS. WASHINGTON (7)
(Series tied 3-3)
Last night's result
Washington 2 N.Y. Rangers 1
Saturday's game
Washington at N.Y. Rangers, , 7:30 p.m.
PHILADELPHIA (5) VS. NEW JERSEY (6)
(New Jersey wins series 4-1)
Tuesday's result
New Jersey 3 Philadelphia 1

WESTERN CONFERENCE
ST. LOUIS (2) VS. LOS ANGELES (8)
(Los Angeles wins series 4-0)
PHOENIX (3) VS. NASHVILLE (4)
(Phoenix wins series 4-1)
Monday's result
Phoenix 2 Nashville 1

CONFERENCE FINALS

(Best-of-7)

EASTERN CONFERENCE
NEW JERSEY (6) VS. N.Y. RANGERS OR WASHINGTON
Monday, May 14
New Jersey at N.Y. Rangers **or** Washington at New Jersey, 8 p.m.
Wednesday, May 16
New Jersey at N.Y. Rangers **or** Washington at New Jersey, 8 p.m.
Remainder of Schedule TBA

WESTERN CONFERENCE
PHOENIX (3) VS. LOS ANGELES (8)
Sunday's game
Los Angeles at Phoenix, 8 p.m.
Tuesday, May 15
Los Angeles at Phoenix, 9 p.m.
Remainder of Schedule TBA

SCORING LEADERS

	G	A	PT
Giroux, Pha	8	9	17
Briere, Pha	8	5	13
Kovalchuk, NJ	5	7	12
Brown, LA	6	5	11
McDonald, StL	5	5	10
B.Richards, NYR	5	5	10

VOLLEYBALL

NORCECA MEN'S OLYMPIC QUALIFYING

At Long Beach, Calif.
Last night's results
Quarter-finals
Cuba def. Trinidad & Tobago, 3-0 (25-18, 25-13, 25-16)
Mexico vs. Puerto Rico
Wednesday's results
Canada def. Cuba, 3-0 (25-21, 25-17, 25-21)
Puerto Rico def. Dominican Republic, 3-0 (25-15, 25-18, 25-16)
Trinidad & Tobago def. Costa Rica, 3-0 (25-18, 25-23, 25-19)
U.S. def. Mexico, 3-0 (25-23, 25-19, 25-14)
Today's matches — All Times Eastern
Semifinals
Canada vs. Quarter-final winner, 9 or 11 p.m.
U.S. vs. Quarter-final winner, 9 or 11 p.m.
Tomorrow's matches
Third Place — Semifinal losers, 8 p.m.
Championship (winner earns Olympic berth)
Semifinal winners, 11 p.m.

HOCKEY

IIHF MEN'S WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP

At Helsinki and Stockholm

PRELIMINARY ROUND

GROUP A

	GP	W	OTW	OTL	L	GF	GA	Pt
Finland	4	4	0	0	0	14	3	12
Canada	**4**	**3**	**0**	**1**	**0**	**17**	**11**	**10**
U.S.	4	2	1	0	1	19	13	8
Slovakia	4	2	0	0	2	10	8	6
Switzerland	4	2	0	0	2	12	11	6
Belarus	4	1	0	0	3	8	11	3
France	4	1	0	0	3	11	24	3
Kazakhstan	4	0	0	0	4	8	18	0

GROUP B

	GP	W	OTW	OTL	L	GF	GA	Pt
Sweden	4	4	0	0	0	18	8	12
Russia	4	4	0	0	0	14	5	12
Czech Republic	4	2	1	0	1	10	8	8
Latvia	4	2	0	0	2	11	10	6
Norway	4	1	0	1	2	12	13	4
Germany	4	1	0	0	3	7	10	3
Italy	4	0	1	0	3	6	17	2
Denmark	4	0	0	1	3	8	15	1

Note: Three points for a regulation win, two for an overtime win and one for an overtime loss.
Yesterday's results
At Helsinki — Finland 7 France 1
U.S. 5 Belarus 3
At Stockholm — Czech Republic 3 Latvia 1
Russia 3 Denmark 1
Today's games — All Times Eastern
At Helsinki — Kazakhstan vs. U.S., 9:15 a.m.
Finland vs. **Canada**, 1:15 p.m.
At Stockholm
Italy vs. Czech Republic, 10:15 a.m.
Russia vs. Sweden, 2:15 p.m.
Tomorrow's games
At Helsinki — Slovakia vs. Belarus, 5:15 a.m.
Switzerland vs. France, 9;15 a.m.
Kazakhstan vs. **Canada**, 1:15 p.m.
At Stockholm — Norway vs. Latvia, 6:15 a.m.
Germany vs. Denmark, 10:15 a.m.
Italy vs. Sweden, 2:15 p.m.
Sunday's games
At Helsinki — Finland vs. U.S., 9;15 a.m.
Switzerland vs. Slovakia, 1:15 p.m.
At Stockholm
Russia vs. Czech Republic, 10:15 a.m.
Germany vs. Norway, 2:15 p.m.

TENNIS

ATP-WTA MADRID OPEN

At Madrid, Spain
Yesterday's results
Men
Singles — Third Round
Novak Djokovic (1), Serbia, def. Stanislas Wawrinka, Switzerland, 7-6 (5), 6-4.
Fernando Verdasco (15), Spain, def. Rafael Nadal (2), Spain, 6-3, 3-6, 7-5.
Roger Federer (3), Switzerland, def. Richard Gasquet (14), France, 6-3, 6-2.
Alexandr Dolgopolov (16), Ukraine, def. Jo-Wilfried Tsonga (4), France, 7-5, 3-6, 7-6 (2).
David Ferrer (5), Spain, def. Nicolas Almagro (11), Spain, 7-6 (5), 3-6, 7-6 (8).
Doubles — Second Round
Max Mirnyi, Belarus, and **Daniel Nestor (2), Toronto**, def. David Marrero and Fernando Verdasco, Spain, 6-3, 7-6 (4).
Women
Singles — Third Round
Maria Sharapova (2), Russia, def. Lucie Safarova, Czech Republic (walkover).
Agnieszka Radwanska (4), Poland, def. Roberta Vinci, Italy, 7-6 (1), 6-4.
Serena Williams (9), U.S., def. Caroline Wozniacki (6), Denmark, 1-6, 6-3, 6-2.

RBC CUP

CANADIAN JR. A CHAMPIONSHIP

At Humboldt, Sask.
Round Robin

	GP	W	L	GF	GA	Pt
x-Humboldt	3	3	0	10	3	6
x-Penticton	4	2	2	8	7	4
x-Soo	4	2	2	12	12	4
Portage	3	1	2	6	10	2
Woodstock	4	1	3	10	11	2

x — clinched playoff berth.
Yesterday's results
Soo 7 Woodstock 4
Portage vs. Humboldt
End of Round Robin
Wednesday's result
Penticton 3 Portage 1

NBA PLAYOFFS

CONFERENCE QUARTER-FINALS

(Best-of-7)
All Times Eastern

EASTERN CONFERENCE
CHICAGO (1) VS. PHILADELPHIA (8)
(Philadelphia wins series 4-2)
Last night's result
Philadelphia 79 Chicago 78
MIAMI (2) VS. NEW YORK (7)
(Miami wins series 4-1)
Wednesday's result
Miami 106 New York 94
INDIANA (3) VS. ORLANDO (6)
(Indiana wins series 4-1)
BOSTON (4) VS. ATLANTA (5)
(Boston wins series 4-2)
Last night's result
Boston 83 Atlanta 80

WESTERN CONFERENCE
SAN ANTONIO (1) VS. UTAH (8)
(San Antonio wins series 4-0)
OKLAHOMA CITY (2) VS. DALLAS (7)
(Oklahoma City wins series 4-0)
L.A. LAKERS (3) VS. DENVER (6)
(L.A. Lakers lead series 3-2)
Last night's result
L.A. Lakers at Denver
Tomorrow's game
x-Denver at L.A. Lakers, 10:30 p.m.
MEMPHIS (4) VS. L.A. CLIPPERS (5)
(L.A. Clippers lead series 3-2)
Wednesday's result
Memphis 92 L.A. Clippers 80
Tonight's game
Memphis at L.A. Clippers, 9 p.m.
Sunday's game
x-L.A. Clippers at Memphis, TBA
x — played only if necessary.

SCORING LEADERS

	G	FG	FT	PTS	AVG
Bryant, LAL	5	57	30	156	31.2
James, Mia	5	43	46	139	27.8
Anthony, NY	5	52	31	139	27.8
Nowitzki, Dal	4	34	38	107	26.8
Durant, OkC	4	35	27	106	26.5
Paul, LAC	5	38	30	113	22.6
Westbrook, OkC	4	34	17	89	22.3
Pierce, Bos	5	37	27	109	21.8
Granger, Ind	5	40	13	107	21.4
Wade, Mia	5	43	17	105	21.0
Parker, SA	4	30	23	84	21.0
Gay, Mps	5	36	25	101	20.2
Griffin, LAC	5	39	23	101	20.2

Not including last night's games

SOCCER

MLS

EASTERN CONFERENCE

	GP	W	L	T	GF	GA	Pt
Kansas City	9	7	2	0	12	5	21
New York	10	6	3	1	20	14	19
D.C. United	11	5	3	3	20	15	18
Chicago	8	3	2	3	9	9	12
Montreal	10	3	5	2	11	15	11
New England	9	3	6	0	8	12	9
Houston	7	2	3	2	7	9	8
Columbus	8	2	4	2	6	10	8
Philadelphia	8	2	5	1	5	9	7
Toronto	8	0	8	0	6	18	0

WESTERN CONFERENCE

	GP	W	L	T	GF	GA	Pt
Real Salt Lake	12	7	3	2	18	12	23
Seattle	9	7	1	1	13	3	22
San Jose	10	7	2	1	21	11	22
Vancouver	9	5	2	2	9	7	17
Colorado	10	5	5	0	15	12	15
Dallas	11	3	5	3	10	16	12
Los Angeles	9	3	5	1	11	14	10
Chivas USA	9	3	6	0	5	11	9
Portland	9	2	5	2	9	13	8

Wednesday's results
New York 1 Houston 0
Chicago 0 Real Salt Lake 0
Seattle 2 Dallas 0
Tomorrow's games — All Times Eastern
Los Angeles at Montreal, 4 p.m.
D.C. United at Houston, 4:30 p.m.
Dallas at Columbus, 7:30 p.m.
Vancouver at New England, 7:30 p.m.
Kansas City at Chicago, 8:30 p.m.
Real Salt Lake at Seattle, 10 p.m.
Sunday's games
New York at Philadelphia, 12:30 p.m.
Chivas USA at San Jose, 7 p.m.

AMWAY CANADIAN CHAMPIONSHIP

(WINNER QUALIFIES FOR CONCACAF CHAMPIONS LEAGUE)
SEMIFINALS — SECOND LEG
Last night's results
Toronto 2 Montreal 0
(Toronto advances on 2-0 aggregate)
Vancouver 3 Edmonton 1
(Vancouver advances 3-1)

CONCACAF WOMEN'S UNDER-17 CHAMPIONSHIP

Yesterday's results
Semifinals
Canada 1 Mexico 0
U.S. 7 Panama 0
Tomorrow's games
Third Place
Panama vs. Mexico, 3:30 p.m.
Championship (winner earns
U.S. vs. **Canada**, 6:30 p.m.

GERMANY

BUNDESLIGA

PROMOTION-RELEGATION PLAYOFF
First Leg
Hertha Berlin 1 Fortuna Duesseldorf 2

LACROSSE

NLL PLAYOFFS

DIVISION FINALS

Tomorrow's games — All Times Eastern
EAST DIVISION
Rochester at Toronto, 7 p.m.
WEST DIVISION
Edmonton at Minnesota, 9:30 p.m.

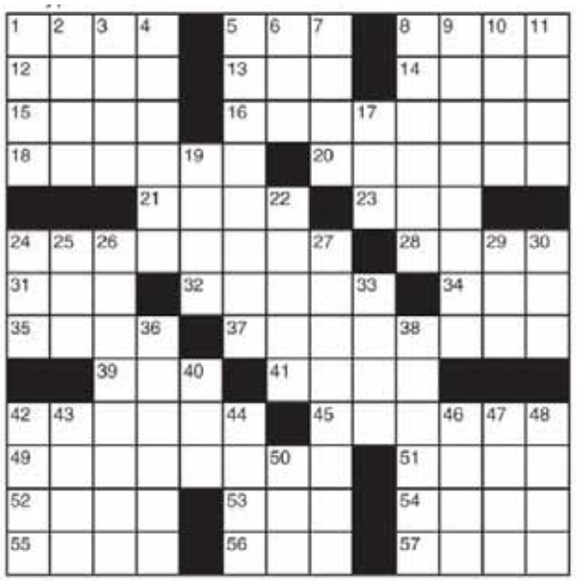
Crossword

Across

1 Mayflower, for one
5 Craze
8 Grand poetry
12 Singer Vikki
13 Conceit
14 Create
15 Lotion additive
16 "Moby-Dick" author
18 Art of growing dwarfed plants
20 Assistant who does errands
21 Wee
23 Before
24 Tunes
28 Engrave
31 Favorable vote
32 Very, in music
34 Pirouette pivot
35 Ties up the phone
37 Rapid decline
39 — -tzu
41 Of a specified type
42 Quantity
45 "Merci"
49 "The Velvet Fog"
51 Nevada city
52 "Survivor" setting
53 Rowing tool
54 Werewolf's inspiration
55 "— of Our Lives"
56 Moines lead-in
57 Picnic invaders

Down

1 Wound cover
2 Head light?
3 Press
4 "Allakazam!"
5 NOW doctrine
6 Candle count
7 Mini mannequin?
8 One with a new homeland
9 South Carolina symbol
10 Sooner St.
11 Witnessed
17 Churchill's gesture
19 Verdi opera
22 Sycophants' replies
24 Gasoline ratio (Abbr.)
25 Historic time
26 Pine variety
27 Odists, in a way
29 Farm female
30 Farm female
33 Pruritus
36 Fries lightly
38 Jenna Elfman TV role
40 Lennon's lady
42 Surrounded by
43 Small plateau
44 Walked (on)
46 Night glower
47 Entanglement
48 Half the offspring
50 West of Hollywood



Sudoku

9		7				1		6
	2		4		5		8	
3								9
		2	9		7	8		
	9						7	
		1	3		8	6		
8								1
	5		1		4		3	
7		4				2		5

How to play
Fill in the grid, so that every row, every column and every 3x3 box contains the digits 1-9. There is no math involved. You solve the puzzle with reasoning and logic.

Yesterday's Sudoku

3	4	7	9	8	1	6	2	5
1	5	2	7	6	4	3	8	9
8	9	6	2	3	5	1	7	4
6	7	3	4	1	2	9	5	8
9	8	4	6	5	7	2	3	1
2	1	5	3	9	8	7	4	6
5	6	9	8	2	3	4	1	7
7	2	8	1	4	9	5	6	3
4	3	1	5	7	6	8	9	2

Yesterday's Crossword

Cryptoquip

How to play
This is a substitution cipher where one letter stands for another. Eg: If X equals O, it will equal O throughout the puzzle.

EW D KEQZ WHSSJU JUBHN D ZVIH QJVBLKX HRLDLH, E IVHRR XJV YEIZL RDX ZH ER UHSS-YDBJKHN.

Yesterday's Cryptoquip: BECAUSE HE CONTINUALLY EYEBALLS PEOPLE RUDELY, HE HAS EARNED THE NICKNAME "STARE MASTER."

Today's Cryptoquip Clue: R equals S

For today's crossword answers and for expanded horoscopes, go to metronews.ca

Weather

TODAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY
MAX: 14° MIN: 0°	MAX: 20° MIN: 3°	MAX: 24° MIN: 6°

BT BREAKFAST TELEVISION

ANDREW SCHULTZ
WEATHER SPECIALIST
"I get to spread the word on how your day, evening or weekend will shape up with our ever-changing weather here in Alberta".
WEEKDAYS 5:30 AM

Horoscope

Aries | March 21 - April 20. Identify where savings can be made. Don't add to your financial problems by buying things you don't need.

Taurus | April 21 - May 21. It may annoy you that someone needs convincing that you care for them. Make the effort. Say something nice. You'll be rewarded this weekend.

Gemini | May 22 - June 20. Your imagination will get a boost today but watch out it doesn't go too far and you start imagining things that are never going to happen.

Cancer | June 21 - July 22. You may have high expectations of yourself. You're going places, but keep your feet on the ground.

Leo | July 23 - Aug. 22. Common sense tells you to steer clear of other people's disputes, especially on the work front.

Virgo | Aug. 23 - Sept. 22. Do what you feel like doing today, not what other people say you should. You have an obligation to help, but you've done more than your share.

Libra | Sept. 23 - Oct. 22. Someone thinks they can part you from your hard-earned cash by pretending they are in distress and only you can help them.

Scorpio | Oct. 23 - Nov. 21. There are many people who expect something for nothing. They're unlikely to get it from you today.

Sagittarius | Nov. 22 - Dec. 21. You don't have to prove anything to anyone, not today nor any other day. Do what you feel is right.

Capricorn | Dec. 22 - Jan 20. Don't let others see that you are desperate to possess something or they will push up the price.

Aquarius | Jan. 21 - Feb 18. Your ambitions are likely to clash with your personal commitments today — and it is your ambitions that must be favoured.

Pisces | Feb. 19 - March 20. You won't be much in the mood for work today. Just be careful you don't overdo it. Travelling and socializing can be exhausting! SALLY BROMPTON

Caption Contest

"Here is your nose for your clown suit, Mr. Gulliver, sir."
Jerome P.
TAMMY LJUNGBLAD, KANSAS CITY STAR, THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Win!

You write it!

Write a funny caption for the image above and send it to play@metronews.ca — the winning caption will be published in tomorrow's Metro.

Jesus is ...

your protector. Are you being oppressed by the enemies? Are you afraid of them? Have you been pushed to the wall? Do not depend on your own strength;

Put your trust in him because "the Lord is faithful. He will strengthen you. He will guard you from the evil one." Make Jesus your shield today and he will protect you.

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